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**A Resolution Strong and Deep: the First Battle of Bull Run
and its Impact on Connecticut**

Erin Yvonne Dorsey

History Senior Thesis

Advisor: Scott Gac

Spring, 2012

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Acknowledgements

Many people helped me through this process for which I am very grateful. I am incredibly grateful to Professor Gac who was not only my thesis advisor, but also my academic advisor for the past two years. I am so thankful for his support, guidance, and providing me with videos like “Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter” which made me laugh and greatly eased the stress of work.

I also owe a great deal to Professor Haberman who thoroughly edited my thesis and helped me to discover for deeper meaning in each text and source.

Also, thank you to Professor Lestz, our fearless Team Thesis leader. I am so thankful for our weekly class meetings, your guidance, and your confidence in me.

A huge thank you to Professor Chatfield, my first advisor at Trinity and the person who sparked my passion for the Civil War. I credit him with generating my love and enthusiasm for history.

I am also very thankful to Ms. Hart and Mr. Liszka for helping me find a huge number of sources used to write this paper and supporting me throughout this process.

Thanks to the many people at the Connecticut Historical Society and the Connecticut State Library who allowed me to research and look at primary sources for hours on end.

I am positive that without my roommates, completing my thesis would not have been possible. The countless trips to Chipotle and Starbucks, the hours they were forced to listen to my thesis playlist, and the motivation they provided me with when I so badly wanted to sleep surely helped me write and finish my thesis. Thanks so much Sarah and Nichola.

I especially must thank my roommate Paige who not only went through this thesis process with me, but also helped me so much by lending me her car, coming with me to do research, and truly just for being my partner in crime (since freshman year I might add). Being roommates for two years and taking eight classes together throughout college normally might make people sick of each other, but I will greatly miss you all the way from “Canada-lite,” unless I freeze to death.

And of course, none of this would have been possible without my parent’s support and love. In particular I must thank my father for continuously trying to teach me how to edit papers effectively. I know that you helped me become a better writer. And thanks to my mom who supported me and pushed me to work harder than ever before.

Introduction

The Battle of Bull Run

Gone were the spring days when some had poked fun at the very idea of secession, or mockingly believed Southerners would flee the field of battle and quickly return to the Union. Bull Run had dashed such hopes. It had also sparked a significant peace movement, which revealed that not everyone in the state supported a war to coerce Southern loyalty. Some believed that Connecticut, Hartford especially, was a nest of traitors. If true, it was not enough to stop the much more widespread patriotism that poured forth from around the state.¹

Lieutenant Bolles of Captain Lewis' Company in the Third Connecticut Regiment survived the Battle of Bull Run, the first battle of the Civil War. In a letter home dated July 23, 1861 just two days after the battle he recounted his company's participation. He recalled that he and his men fought nobly. The Union's loss, Bolles mused, was a result of the troops' failure to find a weak point in the rebel formation, which was impossible to do because "Gen. Johnston, (rebel), sent forward 15,000 rebel troops against us, [and] when the 71st and 72d New York fell back, the result was a perfect stampede among our troops."² Bolles and the rest of Lewis' Company fled from the battlefield while serving as the rear-guard to the baggage train. Bolles described two rebel cavalry attacks while also guarding the Union lines falling back. "We succeeded in keeping them off until the rebels opened a fire from their flying artillery of shot, shell, and grape, that of course with only 55 men we could not contend with, and out Captain received orders to retreat, which we did in good order."³ Physically and mentally exhausted,

1. Matthew Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War: Slavery, Sacrifice, and Survival* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2011), 70.

2. "From the Third Regiment," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 26, 1861.

3. "From the Third Regiment," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 26, 1861.

Bolles and his comrades reached the Union camp in the early morning. Despite their pain, Bolles praised his men and leaders for their brave soldiery at Bull Run.⁴

Connecticut soldiers' experience, like Bolles', reflected that of most Union troops at Bull Run. July 21, 1861 would go down in history as one of the Union's greatest losses in the Civil War. Near Manassas, Virginia, the 30,000 Union troops, under Brigadier General Irvin McDowell took on the Confederates led by Brigadier General P.G.T. Beauregard.⁵ McDowell's attack plan was believed to be foolproof by those in the Union; even historians today agree that it was inspired. His strategy, though, required perfect coordination among the leading Union generals, which would not happen in the battle.⁶ McDowell planned to send two-thirds of the army against Beauregard, while the remaining third cut the rail line off to Richmond at Manassas Junction where some of the confederate troops were stationed.⁷ McDowell wanted General Robert Patterson, leader of 15,000 Union troops, to stop rebel General Joseph E. Johnston from meeting with Beauregard. If he failed, the Confederates would have equal numbers to the Yankees at Manassas, which would easily prevent a Union win.⁸ Slow to move, Patterson failed to stop Johnston's move to Manassas, thus providing the Confederates a level playing field.

By July 21, McDowell had delayed his attack numerous times because of food and supply shortages, plan alterations and improvements, and scouting. Nevertheless, at Bull Run, the Union Army was able to put forth a strong effort against the Confederates for most of the day. At one point the Union troops pushed the Confederates back, giving them hope. As the win slipped away from the rebels, Confederates called for reinforcements who then turned the tables

4. "From the Third Regiment," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 26, 1861.

5. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 57.

6. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 57.

7. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 57.

8. James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: University Press, 1988), 339.

and caused a Union loss at Henry House Hill.⁹ The Union army gave rise to the legend of “Stonewall” Jackson at the Hill where he saved the Confederates with his troops.¹⁰ Confusion over Confederate uniforms and Yankee uniforms could also be attributed to the Union’s loss because the Union soldiers stopped firing on the enemy, after mistaking them for Yankees. This misunderstanding destroyed two Union artillery batteries’ guns and caused Yankee soldiers to run in a panic.¹¹ After the Union troops lost control, it took little time for the Confederates to finish the battle. In the early evening, the Union troops rushed from the now bloody battlefield towards Centreville, leaving much of their arms and supplies behind.¹² The Connecticut troops, among the last to leave the battlefield, did not retreat, but forced the Confederates to turn away from the Union army, thus preventing a likely devastating Confederate charge.¹³ This action saved Washington and the Union army.¹⁴ The Battle of Bull Run obviously did not go as planned or expected, Those in the Union were shocked to learn their army had lost to the rebels, especially since the latest dispatches that Sunday reported their probable win. The *Hartford Daily Courant* in Hartford, Connecticut would even celebrate the news of the Union’s triumph the following day, only to learn that the Union army had taken a turn for the worse. Because no one expected the loss at Bull Run, it gave those in the Union, and Connecticut in particular, quite a shock.

Works on Connecticut and the Civil War have focused on general overviews of the Civil War period, certain regiments, or key players. Early works on Connecticut’s role in the Civil War are *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut During the War of 1861-65* (1868) by

9. David Detzer, *Donnybrook: The Battle of Bull Run* (New York: Mariner Books, 2005), 437.

10. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 342.

11. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 344.

12. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 344.

13. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 58.

14. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 58.

W.A. Croffut and John M. Morris and *Connecticut for the Union: the Role of the State in the Civil War* (1965) by John Niven. Both works look at Connecticut's participation militarily, on the home front, and politically throughout the war's entirety. Because both sources cover such a wide period of time and general topic, they brush past significant details of the war such as the importance of certain battles and reactions to them. They fail to differentiate between the reactions of civilian, political, and military personnel. Matthew Warshauer wrote the most recent account about Connecticut and the Civil War entitled *Connecticut in the American Civil War: Slavery, Sacrifice, and Survival* (2011). Unlike the former authors, Warshauer's work examines slavery and its affects on Connecticut in depth in relation to the Civil War. Warshauer looked at nationalism and slavery's end as separate objectives in the war because "slavery was amazingly controversial in Connecticut."¹⁵

As this paper examines the role of the First Battle of Bull Run in connection to Connecticut, William Davis' *Battle of Bull Run: A History of the First Major Campaign of the Civil War* and David Detzer's *Donnybrook: The Battle of Bull Run, 1861* also play a significant role. The former examines the causes of the battle, participants, strategies, and army life. Most of all it dissects each movement of the battle and the affects on the Union and Confederate armies. The latter explores the coming of the first major battle of the Civil War, its execution, and the Union and Confederate armies. Both sources are imperative in understanding the battle itself, the affects on the armies (particularly the Union), the preparations, and even Connecticut's involvement. This paper will draw from the information provided by all works referred to above, and expand in greater detail Connecticut's involvement and reaction to the Battle of Bull Run and the effects from it.

15. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 220.

Chapter One examines the lives of Connecticut soldiers before the Battle of Bull Run – from the cannon fire at Fort Sumter to preparations for the battle. Connecticut soldiers enlisted after the fall at Fort Sumter for various reasons from fighting for the Union cause, boredom, and other motivations, which pushed them to risk their lives. After enlistment, the Connecticut soldiers prepared to leave Connecticut for the nation’s capital; this period involved a great deal of sitting and waiting for the Connecticut Government and the Federal Government to arm and dress the soldiers. Following their stay in Connecticut, the soldiers made their way and camped on the outskirts of Washington D.C. At this camp the soldiers endured hours of drilling and harsh conditions. Following preparations made in Washington, much of the Union Army moved into Confederate territory where anticipation of the first major battle of the war consumed soldiers’ thoughts. As the tensest period experienced before the battle, soldiers readied themselves by scouting missions, picket guard, and drilling.

The Connecticut Civil War veterans and new enlistments responses to the loss at Bull Run and its effects compose the Second Chapter. The major loss, shocking to most, according to historians had greatly affected the Union’s morale; however, my research has shown that the loss at Bull Run affected the Connecticut soldiers in minor ways. Their reasons for enlisting or reenlisting remained largely the same, their life at camp barely changed (with the exception of the war progressing), and their enthusiasm and dedication to the Union increased (as it had after Fort Sumter). Though the battle was detrimental to the Union’s war cause, Connecticut citizens and soldiers on the whole continued to support the war.

Compared to the experience of the soldiers were those of the Connecticut politicians at home enduring their own political war in addition to the one against the Confederacy. The Connecticut political sphere housed nearly equal parts of Democrats and Republicans, due to its

history and economic make-up, which caused great amounts of tension in regards to the war effort. The Peace Democrats, who strongly dissented to the war, set themselves against the War Democrats and the Republicans, who supported the war; because both factions were very strong in Connecticut, constant battles arose in the Connecticut Government. At the start of the war, the pro-war politicians held the majority in the Legislature. Their popularity, just slightly larger than the Peace Democrats, allowed for them to make advancements in favor of the war with only some difficulty.

After the loss at Bull Run the Peace Democrats struck while the iron was hot and dissent against the war high. The Union's loss greatly affected Connecticut politics by awakening the Peace Democrats and inspiring them to fervently air their grievances about the war. They now had a solid reason to fight against the war on a much larger scale – it was no longer going to be short and lots of people would die. This startling realization caused people to question their support of the war. Chapter Four explores the great political changes brought on by the Union's loss at Bull Run. The now vocal Peace Democrats and the resulting pro-war reaction ended in riots, violence, destruction, and political measures against the Peace Democrats.

The Union loss at Bull Run was detrimental on numerous levels, but in the small New England state of Connecticut, it shook up the political sphere most. While Connecticut soldiers' reasons for enlistment and camp life went unaffected, Connecticut politicians underwent a drastic change when the Peace Democrats began to speak aggressively against the war effort and Connecticut pro-war politicians. The Peace Democrats tried to gain more support at the most opportune moment, when the Connecticut people, demoralized by their realizations of the war's likely long continuance, began to question the war's purpose and chance of success.

James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* sparked my initial interest in the Battle of Bull Run. He wrote on it, "The paradox of Bull Run: its legacy of confidence both hurt and helped the South; the humiliation and renewed determination both hurt and helped the North."¹⁶ Inspired by McPherson's juxtaposition between the North and South, I decided to examine the battle's effects on Connecticut because of the vast archived material available to me at the Connecticut Historical Society, the Connecticut State Library and even Trinity College. From my research, I came to understand that Bull Run garnered a hugely different response from the Connecticut political and military groups due to numerous different factors. I thought it was so interesting that Bull Run could foster such different effects on two important Connecticut groups because of the state's political history.

16. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 350.

Chapter One

Passion Before the Storm: Connecticut Soldiers from Enlistment to the Battle of Bull Run

Frinkle Fry, the pseudonym for Union soldier Elnathan B. Tyler,¹⁷ enthusiastically offered his services when Lincoln called for 75,000 troops after the fall of Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861.¹⁸ Fry desired to help protect the Union capital and forts from the rebelling southern states.¹⁹ The Civil War had started and men of Connecticut, like Fry, answered the President's plea for enlistments. At the moment Fry learned he was accepted into Connecticut ranks, he recalled fondly,

With what fear and trembling I stretched my five feet and six inches up against the measuring post, when I went to see if I was tall enough and big enough for a soldier! What words will describe my joy on finding myself accepted! How sorry I felt for those poor fellows that were too short, or old, or were otherwise disabled and rendered unfit for military duty! How sad and gloomy they looked, on finding themselves rejected! Poor fellows!²⁰

Most Connecticut men reflected Fry's desperation to be in the army. They, like Fry, saw the war as a means of obtaining a hero's status, and rightly so; fellow citizens treated men in the army like kings at the war's start. Throughout the nutmeg state, and, more generally, the North, there was a sense of urgency that the war would soon be over – a quick and easy northern victory.²¹ Union leaders and civilians viewed the Confederacy and Confederate Army as a motley crew unorganized and easily conquerable. With this belief in mind, Connecticut rallied to the cause of

17. Fry most likely used a pseudonym because of the satirical nature of his work. Despite the work's tone and its publication eleven years after the First Battle of Bull Run, Fry's descriptions and stories appear to be in accordance to reports in papers and such.

18. Frinkle Fry [Elnathan B. Tyler], "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run: A Humorous Account of some of the Exploits and Experiences of the Three Months Connecticut Brigade, and the part they bore in the National Stampede* (Connecticut: George L. Coburn Steam Print, 1872), 12.

19. Fry, "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run*, 12.

20. Fry, "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run*, 13-14.

21. Fry, "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run*, 12.

war: men enlisted, factories forged arms, uniforms, and carriages, and women prepared their men for war by making and gathering amenities and small luxuries.²²

From Fort Sumter to Bull Run, the Union prepared for battle. Lincoln rallied his troops to fight against the newly formed Confederate States of America in the hope of bringing the seceded states back into the Union. Connecticut along with other northern states responded eagerly and rapidly to the call for enlistments, war materials, and support for the Federal Government.²³ Towns throughout Connecticut held war meetings that operated as enlistment stations; and within three days of Lincoln's first call for troops Connecticut filled its volunteer quota; even so, Connecticut continued to enlist men.²⁴ Connecticut men filled the Second Regiment in six days and the Third eight days later. Within three weeks of Lincoln's call to arms, Connecticut created fifty-four companies, five times the required state quota.²⁵ In taking up arms, the men of Connecticut expressed an extreme passion for the Union. Throughout the period of enlistment to the Battle of Bull Run, it is evident that Connecticut volunteer soldiers demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the Union; despite the hardships entailed, they remained loyal to the Union cause, often going above and beyond their duties, even if it cost them their lives.

Initial Reactions to the Civil War's Start: Enlistment and Preparation

Fry, the man who so desperately desired to be accepted into the army, did not have a specific reason behind his enlistment. "I never fully made up my mind," he said,

22. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 13.

23. "Governor's Message," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 2, 1861.

24. John Niven, *Connecticut for the Union: the Role of the State in the Civil War* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1965), 48.

25. W.A. Croffut and John M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut During the War of 1861-65* (New York: Ledyard Bill, 1868), 43.

Whether I enlisted out of simon pure patriotism or not, as I had no father, or mother, or sister, and very few friends to feel badly about my going anyway. Many of my mates were going, business was dull, I was young and ready to go in for anything new or exciting, and I guess, on the whole I don't deserve much credit for enlisting that time, after all.²⁶

Fry's reflection lists various reasons that enticed him and other soldiers to volunteer in the army. Some historians attribute Connecticut's huge enlistment numbers to the fact that people, especially younger men, felt bored with the simplicity of the farm, Connecticut's main economic base at the start of war.²⁷ War offered romance and adventure not found in home life.²⁸ Others enlisted for the love and preservation of the United States.²⁹ Those with experience in battle and soldiering joined up because they felt a duty to or the Union or the government had specifically requested their reenlistment, as was the case of Commander of the 2nd Connecticut Infantry Alfred Howe Terry.³⁰ Connecticut men clearly found enough incentives for enlisting as demonstrated by the quickly filled quota.

Fry also wrote of the common Connecticut man's reaction to Fort Sumter and Lincoln's subsequent call for enlistment. In his account, *Wooden Nutmegs*, Fry explores soldier life in the opening months of the conflict. He tells a story of the effect of the War news on Farmer John and his family. Farmer John, the typical Connecticut man at the beginning of the War, learned of Fort Sumter's surrender from a horseman riding through town.³¹ From the minute the horseman told John of the impending War, he thought about his sons and himself enlisting. John immediately told his wife Betsey who wished that her husband and two sons would not go off to war.³²

26. Fry, "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run*, 27.

27. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 6.

28. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 120.

29. "Bounties Not Necessary," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 11, 1861.

30. To Alfred Terry, 22 April 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

31. Fry, "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run*, 21.

32. Fry, "*Wooden Nutmegs*" at *Bull Run*, 21.

Despite his mother's wishes, Willie enlisted the following day after learning of the fall of Fort Sumter. After all, he believed he would be gone for no more than three months and he reasoned, "Someone has got to go."³³ Willie's mother, left heartbroken by her son's decision, symbolized the thousands of women who took care of the homestead while their men fought in the war. His mother, like many, accepted her son's decision to go to war, and though saddened, she felt proud.³⁴ Since she could not stop him from enlisting, Willie's mother focused on ensuring that he was comfortable, so she filled his travel knapsack with knick-knacks and other items that would remind him of home.³⁵ Her loss, Willie's immediate enlistment, and Farmer John's desire to fight hinted towards the positive war feeling that would strike a significant portion of Connecticut's citizens.³⁶ The newly enlisted soldiers understood that war meant pain and death, but they came by the thousands anyway.³⁷

Aside from his rationalization that someone needed to fight, Willie cited slavery as a reason for war – a rarely claimed reason behind enlisting. He held the war as God's punishment for slavery's sin.³⁸ Connecticut, a generally racist state, had only abolished slavery thirteen years before, when it became insignificant to the state's economy.³⁹ For this reason, Fry's mention of slavery as a contributing factor in enlistment seems unusual. Countless Union soldiers, not just Connecticut soldiers, blamed slavery for the war's start and as such sought to rid the nation of it so peace could be achieved between the two sections – a rationalization like this departed from

33. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at *Bull Run*, 23.

34. Willie's brother, Charlie, decided not to fight in the war; Fry cites no reason other than lack of patriotism as a cause.

35. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at *Bull Run*, 24.

36. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at *Bull Run*, 25.

37. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 45.

38. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at *Bull Run*, 23.

39. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 26.

abolitionist reasoning to rid the Union of slavery.⁴⁰ It was logic like that, which allowed the historically racist state to desire slavery's end.

Pro-emancipation sentiment did not banish racism; nor did continued racism invalidate support for emancipation. White Union soldiers' assiduous distancing of slavery from more complicated questions of racial equality allowed many to call for an end to slavery regardless of their own ambivalent racial attitudes and therefore heightened support for emancipation in the Union Army.⁴¹

Connecticut's racist tendencies prevented the abolitionist movement to truly take off in the state, but it did not stop support of emancipation.⁴² Connecticut soldiers wanted slaves' emancipation because they saw it as the only way for the war to end and peace to be restored. Emancipation meant eliminating the tension between the two sections that had been exponentially increasing over the past few decades. Perhaps Connecticut soldiers saw other motives behind their enlistment as more important, but understood the logic in favor of ending slavery.

Those civilians who did not enlist in the volunteer regiments, but supported the war, showered the soldiers with special treatment; the new volunteers were the heroes of the country – the saviors, the patriots fighting for unity. The three-month soldiers, supposedly the only ones who would fight in the war due to its shortness, were celebrities.⁴³ They received praise, recognition, gifts, and support for their bravery.⁴⁴ The three Connecticut Volunteer Regiments remained in Hartford, New Haven, and other Connecticut camps relishing their new lives as heroes until early May.⁴⁵ While in Connecticut camps, they slowly prepared and drilled, but

40. Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Vintage Civil War Library, 2007), 45.

41. Manning, *What this Cruel War was Over*, 50.

42. "Some of our contemporaries have," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 22, 1861.

43. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 28.

44. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 28.

45. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 67.

mostly enjoyed relaxing and mingling with the civilian population.⁴⁶ Civilians visited the camps and brought soldiers amenities that they did not already have, providing them with more comfortable surroundings.

Camp life: Connecticut

Camp life, however, might not have been as glorious as some historians imply. A huge debate existed over the conditions of life at camp life between newspapers like the *Hartford Daily Times*, an antiwar Democrat paper openly sympathetic to the Confederate States of America, and the *Hartford Daily Courant*, a Republican paper that supported war efforts.⁴⁷ Different sources from the army often provided the newspapers with dueling accounts of what life was like for a three-month enlistment soldier. The *Times* claimed that conditions were terrible; the editor, Alfred E. Burr, specifically found joy in picking apart the conditions of Connecticut soldiers' uniforms. His paper claimed that the uniforms were not "proper clothing. The satinet coats shrink, the edges curled up when wet, and they do not appear to be as substantial or comfortable as the nature of the soldier's duty would demand."⁴⁸ The editors of the *Courant*, however, commented that Burr and his paper made these outlandish claims to demoralize the troops and war supporters.⁴⁹ In fact, the *Courant* referenced numerous sources that stated the exact opposite regarding camp conditions. In one issue, Lieutenant Colonel George S. Burnham of the First Regiment said he visited Hartford and found the troops in "good condition and good spirits." In a reprinted article from the *New Haven Palladium*, Captain Rawley reasoned that since countless volunteers gathered so quickly, confusion over rations and

46. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 65.

47. Democratic newspapers generally dissented coercion and war against the Southern states. Republican papers, on the other hand, supported the war cause. Connecticut's population, like the press, was split between the Democrat and Republican parties.

48. "Uniforms," *Hartford Daily Times*, April 30, 1861.

49. "The Suffield Company," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 11, 1861.

equipment was expected, especially since the green troops did not know how to ration food; the soldiers, he said, remained patient and were at no risk of starvation.⁵⁰ A letter from Private Philip W. Hudson supports Captain Rawley's claims that though rations were poor, soldiers still had a good life.⁵¹ While the *Times* insinuated little was being done to provide comfort for the troops in Connecticut, accounts made by the Union officers and soldiers, including Terry and Fry, implied that while conditions may not have been luxurious or comfortable, the government provided the troops with as much as possible, and sent requested supplies.⁵²

The Federal Government struggled to stock regiments with arms and ammunition, and other necessary war supplies. William A. Buckingham, the Governor of Connecticut, had anticipated the difficulties of supplying a quickly organized volunteer army; in January of 1861 he ordered enough arms and supplies to equip five thousand Connecticut soldiers – in addition to the supplies the state already owned. “It was thought that these would be sufficient for any temporary service,” he claimed, “and that the rifle factories of the State could speedily furnish other weapons for five thousand men if required.”⁵³ The government had manufactured enough equipment for a brief war, but few considered that the war might continue on longer than expected. This oversight proved problematic because nearly every state was under-stocked or had ordered equipment that sufficed for a short war only – meaning made of less substantial material or manufactured too quickly.⁵⁴

Fry and his company drilled without arms for a majority of the weeks they stayed in Hartford and once the arms became available, he and his company were still not happy. They had

50. “Military Affairs,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 6, 1861.

51. “Letter from Philip W. Hudson,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 22, 1861.

52. “Military Affairs,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 6, 1861.

53. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 56.

54. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 34.

registered as a Sharps Rifle Company, and received old Springfield Muskets, which fell way below their new “celebrity” standard.⁵⁵ The state arsenal had run out of Sharps rifles among other newer equipment due to the size of the First and Second Regiments. Fry and his cohorts realized their status as heroes after enduring endless praise from Connecticut’s citizens; as such Fry and his company wanted the best equipment possible – they deserved nothing less since they were putting their lives on the line. Furthermore, their fight for the rifles over the muskets likely reflected their worry over using subpar weapons, thus making battle more dangerous. So, Fry and his company vehemently opposed the cheap old muskets and attempted to return them, demanding the Sharps Rifles they signed up to use. Their colonel did not accept their insubordination, and ordered them to use the muskets.⁵⁶ Fry and his company’s arms dispute exemplifies just one of many equipment shortage problems, but overall the Connecticut three-month regiments fared much better than other states.

As soon as each Regiment’s equipment, uniforms, and provisions reached camp in Connecticut, the soldiers left for the Washington D.C. area.⁵⁷ Leaving Connecticut was like being on the grandest float in a parade. “[The citizens] were filled with an enthusiastic multitude, hailing the volunteers with approving cheers and cordial farewells; and the scene was one of solemn and triumphant joy.”⁵⁸ The First Connecticut Volunteer Regiment left on May 8, 1861 on a steamship for Washington. The Second would follow May 9 and the Third Regiment followed four or five days later because it had to wait for equipment.⁵⁹ Passage to Washington occurred by rail or steamship. Colonel Alfred Terry wrote to his mother from the steamship regarding their

55. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 29.

56. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 29.

57. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 65.

58. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 67.

59. “Military Affairs – Three Regiments Under Marching Orders,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 7, 1861.

excellent voyage aside from the multitudes experiencing motion sickness.⁶⁰ Fry also recorded a similar account of his trip up the Potomac River on the Cahawba steamer as pleasant, with a bit of seasickness.⁶¹ The journey aboard the steamers to the Union capital lasted about a week and when the Connecticut Regiments arrived, Army Headquarters sent them to various camps surrounding Washington.⁶²

Camp Life: Washington D.C.

Camp life near Washington differed very little from army life in Connecticut. By the time the First, Second, and Third Regiments reached camp in Washington nearly a month of their enlistment period had elapsed. They would spend another month also outside of Washington, Fry recalled. Monotonous camp life was unexciting for the soldiers.⁶³ Fry described a normal day at camp,

The most remarkable thing we did was to drill; and we did do some drilling during that five or six weeks that we stayed at Washington. For instance, we would take an hour's drill before breakfast; that was to give us an appetite. After breakfast we would take an hour and a half drill; that was to settle our breakfast. After the breakfast settler came guard mounting. After guard mounting came the regular forenoon drill, which ended about dinner time. An hour or so allowed for dinner, then we went out and drilled some. Then the regular afternoon drill lasting until late in the afternoon. Then we were dismissed for fifteen or twenty minutes to get ready for dress parade. Getting ready for dress parade consisted in blacking our boots, rubbing up our brass buttons, putting white gloves on our hands and a smile on our countenance, just as though it was nothing but fun to be a soldier of this great and glorious Republic. After dress parade came supper. After supper we wrote letters and sewed buttons on our clothes.⁶⁴

Like Fry, Colonel Terry wrote of his busy schedule in his home. He told his family about the camp conditions and weather. Numerous times he wrote of the hot days followed by chilly cold

60. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 11 May 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

61. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 30-31.

62. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 11 May 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

63. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 32.

64. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 32-33.

nights. However, unlike Fry, Terry rarely discussed drills or war news – except for when he noted that the drilling proved effective because his troops had greatly improved.⁶⁵ Terry focused on his own health – he often had a sore foot or a boil, his horse – an unbroken “brute,” and news from camp or elsewhere. Terry informed his loved ones that the government and army headquarters kept the officers and soldiers uninformed about war plans until it became necessary for them to know.⁶⁶ Terry wrote to his mother, “I can’t write war news for my own information comes from the New York papers.”⁶⁷ Soldiers appeared to be in a holding pattern for sometime while stationed outside of Washington; they waited and mused about what sort of war they might participate in.

In his letters, Terry often described their supply conditions, discomfort at camp, and his gratitude for packages received. Aside from the hot days and cool nights, Connecticut soldiers under Terry complained of knapsacks that smelled bad and “compressed their chests.”⁶⁸ A blouse shortage also occurred, to which Governor Buckingham assured Terry that he would send more to Washington.⁶⁹ Terry’s ranks also needed head and neck protection from the boiling hot sun and so Polly, Terry’s wife, and some of her lady friends sent a package to Terry’s regiment with “cap covers” that protected them from the sun while they drilled.⁷⁰ Terry ensured that his troops

65. Alfred Terry to Polly, 4 June 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

66. Alfred Terry to Mother, 10 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

67. Alfred Terry to Mother, 18 May 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

68. Alfred Terry to Polly, 22 May 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

69. Alfred Terry to Polly, 4 June 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

70. Alfred Terry to Polly, 22 May 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

were comfortable, on of his many duties as their commanding officer. In return for his care, the soldiers remained hardworking and dedicated to Terry.

Though Terry tried to keep his troops at ease, “Soldiers Aid Societies” and the “Ladies Aid Societies” in Connecticut also helped soldiers lead better lives. These societies largely answered soldiers’ calls for more luxurious items such as pies, teacakes, blankets, jackets, and so on.⁷¹ These societies did all they could to make the soldiers happy while at camp; they knitted, baked, and bought desired items and sent them to camp.⁷² Camp life was not luxurious and soldiers often complained about their discomfort. Aid societies stepped up to help them, but there was only so much they could do. An author at the *Courant* openly addressed the soldiers’ complaints:

We have no desire to say anything to which the soldiers would object. But if they will remember that a tent is not a house, or the camp like the home to which they have been accustomed, they will see that they can never be such.⁷³

Camp life, the soldiers had to understand, was not meant to be a relaxing home away from home. It was meant to prepare the soldiers for battle and as their romantic views of war began to ebb, so did their early enthusiasm for it.

While camped outside of the Union’s capital, some Connecticut soldiers found their conditions and terms of enlistment so unbearable that they faked sick or even deserted their regiment.⁷⁴ Citizens of Connecticut, along with the press, were aware that some soldiers lacked enough loyalty and courage to face the harshness of war and therefore reacted accordingly; these men faced shame in their communities. Their reasons for risking humiliation varied greatly,

71. “Letter from Camp Putnam,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 19, 1861.

72. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 62.

73. “The Camp Ground,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 31, 1861.

74. “Life in Camp,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 8, 1861.

some merely wanted a break from drilling and others found it difficult to prepare for war when the Connecticut and Federal Governments failed to pay their bounties. Soldiers depended on their bounties to pay for their bills and to support their families. Wives and children at home depended on this monthly stipend to feed themselves and keep a roof over their heads because they likely had no steady income.⁷⁵ Some men threatened to leave camp if they received word from home of money struggles or destitution.⁷⁶ Terry even commented on the dwindling numbers of soldiers in his regiment due to the local and Federal Governments' delayed payments. Such dependency on income demonstrates the economic motives behind many soldiers' enlistment.

Bounty amounts often depended upon marital status (those married and with children received more), length of service, and hometown (some gave money to their enlisted soldiers as well).⁷⁷ In a letter to his wife, Terry stated that the newspaper announced his subscription amount, implying that he was unaware of his pay.⁷⁸ And finally, in June of 1861, Terry noted that the payment general had finally arrived at camp to pay those mustered into service, demonstrating the extreme inefficiency of the payment system.⁷⁹ The *Courant* had also written of the Government's appalling slowness of paying the troops.⁸⁰ The bounty system was not necessarily organized in the best manner and changed countless times throughout the war.

75. Alfred Terry to Polly, 4 June 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

76. "Life in Camp," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 8, 1861.

77. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 53.

78. Alfred Terry to Polly, 4 June 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

79. Alfred Terry to Polly, 21 June 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

80. "Volunteers," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 1, 1861.

Bounty amount increases and decreases may be attributed to the elongation of enlistment terms and the call for more troops, which occurred in early May of 1861 and numerous times thereafter. President Lincoln's second call for men to enlist was for three years of service, two three-year were requested of Connecticut.⁸¹ Historians' accounts of Connecticut responses vary, but it appears as though the two new three-year regiments filled up quickly, just not as rapidly as the three-month regiments had. Some historians attribute this to the impending war, reports on poor conditions, and longer service periods, in any case something about these new regiments garnered less enthusiasm than enlistment originally had. Even when enough volunteers enlisted in the Fourth and Fifth Regiments, the Connecticut Government lacked sufficient equipment to give them. It was not until a day before they left for Washington, June 9, 1861, that the Fourth Regiment received any weapons at all.⁸² Because these troops lacked experience and basic training with their weapons, their participation in upcoming battles was unclear. As President Lincoln, Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, and General Irvin McDowell made plans and tactics for the imminent battle at Manassas, the Connecticut officers wondered if the Fourth and Fifth Regiments would be prepared for battle. Nevertheless, the two new regiments went to Washington to await their role.

Camp Life: Across the Potomac into Enemy Territory

By the time the Fourth and Fifth Regiments left for Washington, the First Regiment had moved across the Potomac into Virginia. They left under the cover of darkness and established camp near Alexandria with the intentions of scouting out Richmond and the rebel army.⁸³ The men under Terry left for Virginia on June 24, 1861, ten days later than the First Regiment; Terry

81. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 71.

82. "Fourth Regiment," *Hartford Daily Times*, June 14, 1861.

83. "Correspondence of the *Times*," *Hartford Daily Times*, June 5, 1861.

had awaited his instructions for nearly two weeks before he received his official order to move into Virginia.⁸⁴ The Third Regiment also crossed on June 24. Like before, each regiment that left Washington received cheers and praises from patriotic Union citizens, still regarding the soldiers as heroes.⁸⁵ The soldiers, equally enthusiastic to leave boring camp life, felt “ready for action,” and being in Virginia gave them a greater sense of purpose and excitement.⁸⁶

At their Virginia camp, the three Connecticut Volunteer Regiments carried out new picket guard and scouting duties while continuing to drill and prepare for battle. According to letters sent home and newspaper reports, the Connecticut Regiments had greatly improved their drilling abilities and discipline.⁸⁷ This improvement may be attributed to the movement into southern territory; the reality of war suddenly became far more serious, so soldiers felt more motivation and importance in their mundane exercises.⁸⁸ The monotony of drilling, though exhausting, seemed to finally have a true purpose. Connecticut’s vastly improved skills in drilling would prove very important in the Battle at Bull Run.

Regiments in the Union Army also performed necessary reconnaissance, scouting, and picket guard. The most exhausting and important being picket guard duty, which incidentally also meant two whole days free of drill exercises for those participating soldiers.⁸⁹ While picketing, soldiers lined the perimeter of camp and watched for rebel enemies for a full twenty-four hours. The following day acted as a day of rest with the exception of attending a dress

84. Alfred Terry to Polly, 22 June 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

85. “Movement of troops at Washington – the 3d Connecticut Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 24, 1861.

86. “Movement of troops at Washington – the 3d Connecticut Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 24, 1861.

87. “Army Correspondence,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 20, 1861.

88. “Movement of troops at Washington – the 3d Connecticut Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 24, 1861.

89. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at Bull Run, 35.

parade.⁹⁰ Officers assigned those soldiers with more experience on the outer perimeter because its distance from camp was the largest.⁹¹ Picket guard overseers placed Fry in the middle of the perimeter, where, Fry said, nothing remarkable usually happened.⁹² The first time he and his company picketed, a band of rebels and horses rode, unknowingly, towards the Union camp. Fry and his company hid in the bushes and ambushed them. They captured two confederate soldiers and four enemy horses. If picket guards took rebels prisoner the procedure carried out was thus: rebels needed to be kept as prisoners of war for a day or two; they needed to take the oath of allegiance to the Union; the Union army then gave them food, pocket money, and sent them away. However, Fry stated “the horses wouldn’t take the oath, so they didn’t send them back. That was the way we put down the Rebellion in those days.”⁹³ Fry found this tactic ineffective; even so he and other soldiers carried out their duties.

Some soldiers went on scouting missions the day after picket guard duty. Fry attempted to do so with five soldiers from the Third Connecticut Volunteer Regiment. These men obtained passes from their superior officer and rode to the edge of camp lines.⁹⁴ Soldiers from the First Connecticut Regiment held the picket lines that day and denied their request leave the campgrounds because their pass lacked the signature of a Brigadier General. Fry’s superior, on the other hand, stated that his signature fulfilled pass requirements; this difference exemplifies the pitfalls of army training and regulations. To prove this miscommunication further, another company guarding camp lines let Fry’s group through with the same pass.⁹⁵ The insubordination and more importantly the miscommunication that occurred in camp was reflective of what was to

90. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 36.

91. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 37.

92. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 36.

93. Fry “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 37.

94. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 46.

95. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 51.

come in battle. Different information given to officers would plague the Union at the Battle of Bull Run. And the continued lack of obedience demonstrated by Fry's scouting group, who then found a hole in the picket lines attempted and failed to cross them twice, would foreshadow the soldiers' lack of respect and confusion while in battle. If they could not follow orders away from battle, it was likely they would fail in battle as well. Perhaps, Fry's scouting group in that instance simply wanted to have fun by defying and outsmarting the company on picket guard duty.⁹⁶ Even with such a musing, Fry and his group still attempted to gain some valuable information for the Union Army's use; they did not learn much. They happened upon a farmer who failed to answer their questions about rebel camps and they did not encounter any rebel soldiers.⁹⁷

Other groups that scouted had more successful and exciting experiences. Members of the First Connecticut Regiment went on reconnaissance in mid-June to learn about the London and Hampshire Railroad, which had rail lines by their camp South of Alexandria. They found bridges that could facilitate army movement and they encountered a few rebels. The scouts captured two rebels who had fired at their group. Unlike the farmer Fry and his group spoke with, these rebels knew information of the Confederate Army. According to them, 2,500 rebel soldiers were camped at Fairfax Courthouse and nine hundred more near Alexandria, and, they warned, more troops arrived from all over the South every day.⁹⁸ Information like this, though not necessarily reputable, at least gave the Union Army an estimate of troops needed to take on the Confederates.

96. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 47.

97. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 50.

98. "Adventures of the First Connecticut Regiment," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 20, 1861.

Brigadier General Tyler (head of an army division) himself even went on a scouting mission with a few companies in late June. They intended to gain information on the rebel camp of nine hundred soldiers, but their position became too dangerous and they left before any severe brush with the rebels occurred.⁹⁹ They had a close call though, as they fled the rebel-infested area on a train, a rebel shot at General Tyler but hit another soldier instead. The men then jumped out of the train and scoured the area for the shooter; they found him and took him to Union camp for questioning. This prisoner informed them of the growing rebel numbers near Fairfax; the rebels now numbered over three thousand. Though extremely dangerous, scouting and reconnaissance were obviously imperative towards Union success. Like picket guard duty, scouting missions occurred daily in order to collect information on the rebels, their growing numbers, and even manners to move the Union Army and prepare for battle.¹⁰⁰

As the days of drilling, picketing and scouting continued in Virginia, the three-month enlistments' service time dwindled down. June ended and July came, the three-month regiments began to wonder if they would ever see an actual battle. Fry noted that "[soldiers] were so afraid that the rebels wouldn't fight at all, and when our three months were up we'd have to go home again and tell our friends that we hadn't even had one fight."¹⁰¹ The soldiers mustered for over two months now and began to question whether or not the Union Army would ever make a move before their service time was complete. Every strategy made by the army commanders seemed slowly decided and then quickly executed. The soldiers essentially had to be ready to move at a moments notice, not even officers knew their orders until twenty-four hours before hand

99. "Army Correspondence," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 20, 1861.

100. "Army Correspondence," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 20, 1861.

101. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 56.

usually.¹⁰² Soldiers began to consider their time served and if they had fulfilled their duty or not. Three months after their mustering date (mid-April) they could leave soldier life and head back to the comforts of home. No one could force them to remain and fight the impending battle near Manassas. Some soldiers returned home, but a majority of the Connecticut Volunteer three-month enlistments remained in Virginia to fight the battle they had been waiting for.¹⁰³ The *Courant* ran an article about the First Connecticut Regiment's decision to remain with the army simply stating that the First Regiment would not return home as soon as expected.¹⁰⁴ These soldiers along with other Connecticut troops that chose to remain past their call of duty exemplified and represented the state's dedication, pride, and faith in the cause. Why did they stay? Some wanted to fight and earn their hero status. Others wanted to fight for the Union, their state, to end slavery, or to fulfill their duty. And many could not face the humiliation of returning home without seeing battle. It was with these motivations that the three-month regiments decided to stay and reenlist for what would be the duration of the war.

Camp Life: Nearing Manassas and the Battle

By mid-July preparations for movement and battle had begun, camps near Alexandria broke up and the Union troops moved towards Centreville and Manassas. The number of rebel troops had been growing near Fairfax Courthouse until July when they also moved towards Manassas Junction. The junction proved very important to both the Union and Confederate armies. McDowell saw "the potential for heavy reinforcement that the Manassas Gap Railroad

102. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 14 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

103. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 64.

104. "We understand that private letters," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 20, 1861.

offered to Manassas.”¹⁰⁵ Essentially, the Junction offered the Union a direct rail line into the South from Washington, which they desperately needed for troop and supply transportation. Without the rail line, troops would be forced to take steamers (rough travel) and move huge amounts of supplies themselves. As the 35,000 to 40,000 Union troops moved towards the Junction by way of Centreville, General McDowell planned his battle strategy.¹⁰⁶ Until days before the battle, the troops knew very little of the battle plan and simply waited for their orders in camp. This, however, was not unusual, especially for the circumstances surrounding the Civil War. Musings of enemy spies had been common in the Union Army, and sometimes ended up as true, protecting the battle plan was an attempt at keeping the element of surprise.

Camp life, now focused on preparations for a battle, proved much more exciting for the troops than before; the soldiers understood that they would see some sort of action near the Manassas Junction.¹⁰⁷ On July 16, 1861 the Connecticut Regiments began to advance towards Centreville. They stayed in a field in Vienna over night on their way and encountered some decoys left by the rebels.¹⁰⁸ Rebels littered the roads with fallen trees to prevent easy movement from camp to camp for the Union soldiers and their wagons carting the artillery and provisions.¹⁰⁹ By June 18 most of the Union troops under McDowell’s command reached Centreville. McDowell then commanded General Richardson and General Ayres to attack the rebels at Blackburn’s Ford where they encountered over nine thousand rebels hiding in the woods. The Union troops, significantly smaller in number, fired a few rounds of shots and then

105. William Davis, *Battle of Bull Run: A History of the First Major Campaign of the Civil War* (Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1995), 69.

106. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 54.

107. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 56.

108. Alfred Terry to Mother, 16 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

109. Alfred Terry to Mother, 16 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

retreated.¹¹⁰ This small skirmish acted as a wake up call to many Union soldiers who “seemed to think the whole thing was a grand military picnic, those dead and dying soldiers was a dispiriting reality, and [their] enthusiasm which had been at a boiling point was chilled by a doubt.”¹¹¹

After the debacle of Blackburn’s Ford, the Union troops rested in Centreville for two days before the Battle of Bull Run would take place.¹¹² Terry noted that these two days of rest helped him and his troops feel much fitter for battle.¹¹³ However, Fry noted, that the troops were not aware of the reasons behind the period of rest; he mused that the purpose for their waiting was for a delivery of rations or more troops.¹¹⁴ They were in fact waiting for both and more definitive and decisive orders from McDowell regarding General Patterson and his troops’ position in regards to Confederate General Johnston’s troop movement.¹¹⁵ General Scott took advantage of this waiting period to revitalize the spirits and enthusiasm of the troops after the minor hiccup at Blackburn’s Ford by visiting them at camp. Terry felt complete confidence in Scott and his war tactics after his visit.¹¹⁶ The next day the soldiers would march off to fight in the Battle of Bull Run.

Soldiers’ expectations for the battle at Manassas were seemingly uniform. The Union troops’ morale was high as was their physical fitness and soldiering abilities. In his reminiscence of the Battle of Bull Run, Fry recalled that he believed the Union would come out on top in just a

110. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 63.

111. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 64.

112. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 20 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

113. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 20 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

114. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 65.

115. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 55.

116. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 20 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

few hours of fighting.¹¹⁷ In fact, he had such confidence in the Union Army winning so easily that he had fantasized about what the army and Union would do following its victory. This fantasy included disbanding the Confederate Army and Government, parading through the streets of Richmond, and returning home to a welcome and celebration to outdo all others.¹¹⁸ Terry had similar expectations for the outcome of the battle at Manassas. He wrote to his mother “I cannot doubt that we shall be successful in our attack on the rebels. Our army is so well affronted and in such excellent condition compared with the accounts we have of theirs.”¹¹⁹ Union troops knew that their numbers trumped Confederate troop numbers; they also understood that their army had better training, and their Government stood on more stable ground than the Confederate’s.¹²⁰ How could they lose?

Another reason Northerners, particularly Union soldiers, believed they would win the battle at Manassas was due to their extreme dedication to their cause and rationalities behind the war. To them their cause behind marching to battle was pure, moral, and necessary amongst countless other motivational reasons.¹²¹ A soldier from the Fifth Connecticut Volunteer Regiment wrote,

[We] left home for the love of our country, and with a determination to uphold the stars and stripes, and protect the honor of the flag. We have registered a vow in Heaven that if we are permitted to march to the field of strife, we never will return until Treason and Rebellion are lying in the dust.¹²²

117. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 56.

118. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 56-57.

119. Alfred Terry to Mother, 15 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

120. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 54.

121. Southerners as well believed their causes behind war were better. However, Southerners fought to save something more tangible than the Union, their property (slaves) and states’ rights.

122. “The Fifth Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 19, 1861.

His words demonstrated his extreme belief in the idea of the UNITED States of America – that being an enduring Union of all states. Moreover he believed secession was a sin and that God supported the Union because of this. The Union soldiers loved their country and its symbolism of liberty – the American colonists revolted against the English for liberty and formed the United States of America under the Constitution to form a “more perfect Union.” If the southern states could secede from the Union, what made it more perfect?¹²³ Like the soldier who wrote about his love for the United States, Terry wrote home about his dedication to the cause,

Do not be anxious about me dearest one at home. I must try to do my duty and leave the [] in the hands of God. I know that if this cause in which me fights and if that cause needs my life it must have it. My only anxieties are for you...¹²⁴

Men, like Terry, willingly offered their lives to the cause to preserve the Union. Exemplified through their rationalization for enlistment, enduring continuously poor conditions, and remaining past their enlistment period, most Connecticut volunteer soldiers would have sacrificed anything and everything for the Union. It was with this mentality that they marched into battle the morning of July 21, 1861.¹²⁵ Dedicated, prepared, and ready to fight for the Union and defend what the founding fathers penned less than one hundred years before. Unfortunately, their uncompromised dedication was not enough for the Union to win the Battle of Bull Run. This loss, considered a turning point of the Civil War, affected the Union in numerous ways, but the dedication of Connecticut soldiers did not waver and their lives and actions remained devoted to the Union cause.

123. Abraham Lincoln, “First Inaugural Address,” in *Abraham Lincoln: On Slavery, Freedom, and Union*, ed. Brooks D. Simpson (Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1998), 83.

124. Alfred Terry to Mother, 15 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

125. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 95.

Chapter Two

The Storm's Aftermath: Connecticut Soldiers' Responses to the Battle of Bull Run

Our defeat at the battle of Bull Run corrected, as nothing else could have done, an extravagant estimate of our own strength. It taught us that the rebels had no respect for the national authority, except just so much as could be enforced at the point of the bayonet: it swept away our 'ninety-days' optimism, and showed us that what we had mistaken for an April shower was to be a long storm, and a hard one.¹²⁶

The Battle of Bull Run lasted no longer than a few hours, yet it had a profound impact on the northern war effort. Instead of winning the battle like the northern generals, soldiers, and citizens expected, the Union learned of their gallant and courageous soldiers running from the battlefield, discarding their luggage, and ignoring orders. The confidence felt in the Union's military abilities was so strong that people from the North came to watch their troops win the battle, as if it was an afternoon matinee. They brought chairs, sandwiches, beverages, and binoculars to view their side's win. Instead of watching the Union triumph, citizens saw the less than gallant efforts of their soldiers as they fled the battlefield.

What did this loss mean for the Union? For Connecticut soldiers? While the Battle of Bull Run affected certain aspects of the war and elicited extreme reactions, soldiers' lives changed little. After the battle, the three-month enlistments, along with the new three-year regiments, cited similar motivations to fight and continue on with their lives as soldiers as if this horrifying loss never took place. That is not to say they did not understand the gravity of the situation, they did, but they believed in what they were fighting for despite the loss at Bull Run. Following Bull Run, their hopes for an easy and quick war were shattered, not their beliefs

126. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 101.

behind it.¹²⁷ Connecticut citizens often referenced their state's participation in the Revolutionary War when discussing the Civil War; they spoke of their pride in Connecticut's contributions of men, materials, and spirit. They upheld the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and demonstrated extreme loyalty to the Union's founding documents.¹²⁸ Perhaps this explains Connecticut soldiers' continuing dedication and sacrifice to the Union – they wanted to carry on the legacy their ancestors fought for. The cause was the Union, and Bull Run was no reason to give up, but really a reason to fight even harder.

The Battle of Bull Run, the first official battle of the Civil War, acted as an awakening to the Union. Expecting to win the battle easily, the Union now faced a more difficult road than expected. The war, of course, was not won, nor was it near its end; and Northerners understood that. They understood the damage caused by the loss at Bull Run; it “jolted Northern opinion out of its state of complacency.”¹²⁹ Initial descriptions of the battle reflected the Union's confusion and horror regarding the loss and its significance to their war effort. Between Connecticut newspapers and letters soldiers sent home, reflections on the battle varied greatly. Some recorded McDowell's masterful plan, others spoke of their initial success in battle, and many noted the Union army's quick retreat. These reflections on the Battle of Bull Run demonstrate the significance of the loss and its resulting impact.

Immediate Responses to the Union's Loss at Bull Run

The day after Bull Run, July 22, 1861, exhibited some of the most interesting reactions to the battle. Both Connecticut citizens and soldiers felt different effects of the Union's loss, which

127. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 44.

128. “Jeff. Davis Secession Meeting in Bloomfield,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 7, 1861.

129. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 62.

immediately altered Connecticut citizens' opinions of the war. The soldiers felt demoralized and confused; the citizens finally realized the dangers of war and the soldiers' sacrifices. The loss of the battle baffled Connecticut soldiers because they believed that General McDowell's plan was foolproof and that they had fought valiantly. Terry, in his first letter home after the battle on July 22, wrote to his mother "We have had a great battle and a terrible disaster a merciful God has spared my life."¹³⁰ The words Terry used in this passage show that he thought his soldiers fought nobly in the huge and important battle ("great"), but the Union faced misfortune and adversity while fighting it ("terrible disaster"). His letter briefly summarized the destruction suffered by his regiment – maybe a few killed and several wounded – and then bases the Union defeat on the "supreme number of the great preparedness of the artillery of the enemy."¹³¹ From this letter, Terry clearly recognized the gravity of the Union loss, yet his tone seemed oddly calm and factual rather than emotional. Perhaps Terry could not realize the full repercussions of the loss, aside from the fact that the Union was no better off, so close to the battle's culmination.

Meanwhile, Fry's recollections, a private in the Third Connecticut Volunteer Regiment, focused mainly on the soldiers' preparation to leave for Washington from Centreville. They packed up their camp in Virginia and reflected on the battle; their loss, according to Fry, was due to failure to follow through on McDowell's plan.¹³² The conditions in which the North fought under were much worse than expected; Confederates outnumbered them, Union soldiers were in bad positions, they had less artillery, and communication failures between officers contributed to

130. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 22 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

131. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 22 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

132. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 54.

the Union's downfall according to Fry.¹³³ Stragglers who had separated from their regiment during the battle and retreat wandered into camp throughout the day. At that point the reserves from Washington had returned to Washington; this, Fry noted, meant no army stood between the worn and tired Union soldiers and the rebels. Fry remembered the rumors of a potential Confederate attack, but he recalled that he was sorely let down when no rematch happened.¹³⁴ This disappointment shows that Fry and his fellow soldiers still desired to prove their ability and strength after such a loss, just as they had at the war's start. They believed that they had not yet proven themselves as worthy soldiers or men of the Union; they had not helped the cause.¹³⁵ Fry and other soldiers had worried they would not see action before their enlistment time was up, now that they had seen battle and lost, they had to worry about honoring their own families and the Union.¹³⁶ The need to demonstrate courage, bravery, and honorable qualities, evolved into the need to eradicate the shame garnered from the Union's failure at Bull Run.¹³⁷

Between Fry and Terry's immediate accounts of the battle, it appears that the battle was momentous, but not so detrimental that the cause was lost and troops' hope destroyed. Accounts of the battle in the *Hartford Daily Courant* and the *Hartford Daily Times* described Connecticut troops' participation in the fight and how the battle played out. Interesting enough, the *Hartford Daily Courant* reported on July 22 that the Union took Bull Run in just a few hours. Due to random and sparse dispatches sent to Washington, the *Courant* had not received an updated account of the battle.¹³⁸ In the first hours the Union dominated the field, but eventually lost control when the soldiers tossed General McDowell's plan aside in the heat of battle. Loss of

133. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 68.

134. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 79.

135. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 61.

136. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 56.

137. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 78.

138. "The Latest News by Telegraph," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 22, 1861.

control, execution failure, and poor leadership contributed to the Union's loss. Though McDowell's plan may have appeared seamless, the leadership's failure to carry it out correctly led to the Union's downfall. The *Courant* called the news of the Union's win "the most exciting news which has been received since the fall of Sumter." Though it turned out the Confederacy defeated the Union, this statement still reigned true. Bull Run marked the first actual, full-on battle of the Civil War and its results meant great change; either the continuance of the war or the possibility of the end. Of course, since the *Courant* believed the Union had won, their review of the battle was more celebratory than others.

The *Hartford Daily Times*, on the other hand, had received complete reports on the battle and was aware of the Union loss and the *Courant's* misprint. The editor, Alfred E. Burr, remarked that the battle continued on past the last Union dispatch, which professed their dominance. As a Democrat, the pieces that Burr printed in his paper after the battle subtly celebrated the Union loss and discouraged the war. On July 22, Burr wrote of his sadness to report the Union loss at Bull Run, but filled the rest of the issue with anti-war propaganda that preached why the Union should not attempt to hold onto the southern states.¹³⁹ In his July 24 issue, Burr traced the Union retreat from Bull Run and the damages incurred by it. The article mainly focused on correcting overly exaggerated reports of the wounded, dead and other sorts of losses.¹⁴⁰

Connecticut's casualties from the battle were relatively low, but disparities between newspaper reports, letters home, and gossip led to the belief that the battle was much worse than it actually was. The *Courant*, as shown before, printed numerous reports that were incorrect and

139. "The Retreat from Bull Run," *Hartford Daily Times*, July 22, 1861.

140. "The Retreat from Bull Run," *Hartford Daily Times*, July 22, 1861.

unreliable. In the July 26 issue, the “War Matters” article stated that the army released the list of dead, but some soldiers may have died from pre-battle illnesses, while another portion of the article stated that the Third Connecticut Regiment lost at least thirty men, but the Chaplain of that particular regiment said only three actually died in battle.¹⁴¹ The following day the *Courant* wrote about the difficulties of providing a “missing” list and that nine soldiers from the First Regiment were missing, but they were “most likely to appear.”¹⁴² The chaos after the battle left it nearly impossible to estimate the correct number of those missing, lost, or wounded. Even Colonel Terry, when writing home, estimated that a “few” might have been killed or even less.¹⁴³ In reality, “Connecticut lost four killed, twenty-two wounded, and thirty-seven captured.”¹⁴⁴

Estimations and generalizations made immediately after the battle reflect upon the hysteria created by Bull Run. Fry commented that he “was denying some of the current reports with regard to the battle, at least claiming they were grossly exaggerated.”¹⁴⁵ Fry, who wrote this account after the battle, may have believed the newspaper accounts were simply miscalculations of the casualties, but likely these exaggerations demonstrated the catastrophic feeling that arose from the loss at Bull Run. Because of the expected victory, the Union’s shocking loss made people look at the war through a catastrophic lens of utter disaster. Their over-confidence ultimately made Bull Run appear much worse than it actually was.

In addition to reports detailing the sequences of occurrences in the battle and damages, Connecticut newspapers and officials praised the efforts and bravery of the Connecticut soldiers.

141. “War Matters,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 26, 1861.

142. “The Connecticut Troops at Bull’s Run,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 27, 1861.

143. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 22 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

144. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 59.

145. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at Bull Run, 85.

Unlike the other state regiments at the Battle of Bull Run, the Connecticut Regiments under General Tyler turned to face the forward moving rebels, while their fellow Northerners fled to Centreville.¹⁴⁶ The praise heaped upon the Connecticut privates and officers for this heroic action came from all over the North. Fry recorded a few excerpts from papers that

[Showed] how the services of the Connecticut Brigade were regarded at that time...in the *New York World*...“The Connecticut Brigade was the last to leave the field of Bull Run, and by hard fighting had to defend itself and protect our scattered thousands for several miles of the retreat.”¹⁴⁷

In addition to the *New York World*, Fry also noted that the *New York Times* wrote of the Connecticut soldiers’ bravery and lasting spirit. The fact that other states’ newspapers recognized the Connecticut soldiers demonstrates the enormity of their actions on the battlefield at Bull Run. Not only did they fight gallantly, but they also saved their fellow Unionists. Furthermore, it proves that all of the drilling paid off. They, unlike other regiments, listened to their officers and turned around, preventing further Confederate advances – this maneuver, according to many, most likely saved the Union army. If the Confederates had followed through with an advance, the Union troops would have been unprepared and ill equipped to fend them off. After the Connecticut troops stopped the Confederate advances, they also picked up their comrades’ packs, guns, provisions, and artillery left behind in the chaotic retreat on their way to Centreville – a significant portion of the army discarded their provisions and arms. Restocking the troops quickly would have been impossible, leaving them unarmed and in great danger.¹⁴⁸ They truly allowed for the Union army to keep functioning.

146. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 59.

147. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 80.

148. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 80.

Admirations for Connecticut soldiers' heroics were great in Connecticut. The citizens, soldiers, officers, and politicians could not have been prouder of their men and their actions at the end of the Battle at Bull Run. Connecticut soldiers seemed to be more loyal than any other states' troops because of their life-threatening actions. They followed their officers' orders and stood in the face of death while their comrades fell back. Connecticut troops exemplified the bravery expected of Union men when they held off Confederate advances. Furthermore, their actions upheld the belief that the Union cause was worth fighting for. By about facing they ultimately saved Washington and subsequently the Union itself.¹⁴⁹ Both the *Courant* and the *Times* ran articles about Connecticut soldiers' bravery. The *Courant*, on July 26, commended the Connecticut regiments for not participating in the Union retreat from Bull Run; moreover, it stated that Connecticut soldiers were so dedicated to their duties that they had not even noticed the mass retreat occurring behind them. On August 6, the *Courant* printed Charles L. Brace's opinion on the Connecticut soldiers' conduct at Bull Run.¹⁵⁰ He stated,

This may be true of other regiments, but of these I happen to know. All this is the more remarkable from the fact, that all these regiments behaved with uncommon valor during the day. Military men said that old regulars could not have carried batteries with more *clan*, or borue showers of grape and canister with more steadiness.¹⁵¹

The Connecticut soldiers at the Battle of Bull Run were anything but regulars, so for them to be compared to a regular army was a great compliment to their discipline and training. Even General Keyes, under General McDowell, commended the Connecticut soldiers and officers for their bravery in his battle report. Keyes especially praised Colonel Terry for his direction and

149. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 98.

150. Brace, originally from Connecticut, was a philanthropist and journalist most famous for founding the New York Children's Aid Society and Newsboy Lodging Houses. He was a scholar and minister.

151. "Charles L. Brace pays," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 6, 1861.

leadership on the field.¹⁵² The praise exhibited in the Generals' reports, newspaper articles, and letters, gave Connecticut soldiers a strong sense of pride. With each compliment, their fighting and risk of death became validated. The Connecticut soldiers received the glory they searched for when they enlisted. Comparably, those who enlisted after the battle found this publicity and glory as a reason for enlisting. They too searched for honor and praise and Bull Run proved such exaltations were possible in military life.

Since most Northerners expected the Union to win the first battle, thus ending the war quickly, people sought to find understanding in the Union's loss. People across the Union wondered what went wrong and who was to blame at Bull Run. They understood something needed to change in order to right the horrible wrong that was Bull Run. Because the newspapers and Generals' reports professed that the Connecticut soldiers demonstrated courage and bravery in battle, it was clear that the Connecticut soldiers were not at fault for the loss, nor was it likely that other soldiers were to blame. So, who was at fault? The Union government, the politicians, the citizens, and the soldiers appeared to blame the loss on the Union generals. General McDowell and General Patterson, both extremely well educated and trained men, bore the brunt of the criticism and consequences from the loss at Bull Run.¹⁵³ The Union had carefully planned out its attack of the battlefield nearly a month before anything happened and they believed their plan was foolproof. Fry stated,

A person after carefully reading the plans of the Bull Run campaign, after having carefully studied not only McDowell's programme, but the programme laid down by nine-tenths of the soldiers of his command; after they had felt they fully understood what was expected of our splendid army of the North with its brave commander; if this person should compare the programme laid down with the programme carried out, or the

152. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 81.

153. Davis, *Battle of Bull Run*, 259.

‘situation’ a few days after the battle, he would see at once that there had been some grand mistake somewhere.¹⁵⁴

The plan, Fry implied, was not the problem, the execution of the plan was. Fry and the Union expected for McDowell’s attack on Bull Run to occur much earlier than it had; for various reasons it happened later – needing more troops, lack of artillery and provisions, slow transportation, and poor communication. McDowell eventually put the plan into action, but, similar to the commencement, the actual plan did not go as envisioned. The public and government believed this was due to faulty management of McDowell and Patterson. One soldier from Connecticut wrote in his diary that the Union loss directly related to “mismanagement and want of military skill.”¹⁵⁵

Civilians, like Fry and other soldiers, recognized the generals had not executed the military plan correctly. Charles L. Brace, the man who praised the Connecticut soldiers’ bravery, also blamed the generals for the loss. Brace reasoned that the generals overlooked one significant piece of information – that the troops were very green going into the Battle at Bull Run. While the Connecticut volunteers acted like regulars, most other troops did not and the generals did not factor that into account when planning their attack. The troops, being so “fresh and inexperienced,” were likely to panic and retreat earlier than necessary; Brace said preparing reserves to take over would have counterbalanced the expected premature retreat.¹⁵⁶ Of course there were unknown underlying contributing factors that caused the Union loss, but most found it easiest to criticize and blame the generals because it was their responsibility to direct and control the troops. Generals (and their officers) had a duty to train and ready their troops for battle, but more importantly they needed to hold control and instruct their troops during battle. The

154. Fry, “*Wooden Nutmegs*” at *Bull Run*, 53.

155. *Civil War Era Diary*, 1861, vol.1, page 7, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

156. “Charles L. Brace pays,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 6, 1861.

structure and instructions the troops needed was not implemented later in the Battle of Bull Run as the chaos ensued. The generals bore the brunt of the battle criticism because they failed to follow through with their duty, thus leading to the Union's loss.

The replacement of General McDowell soon after the Confederacy's win at Bull Run definitely helped fuel the rationalizations for blaming him and other generals for the Union defeat.¹⁵⁷ To replace the commander of the army of the Potomac soon after a harrowing and shameful loss conveyed a strong message to the public whether or not the government meant to. In an article about the new leader of the army of the Potomac, General George McClellan, the *Hartford Daily Times* wrote

No fault is found with the officer whom he supersedes; no reproach is cast upon him for the great disaster of Sunday. But it was felt that after that terrible reverse of the army, no successful movement could now be made under a leader who had thus failed, even though the failure was owing to no action or want of action on his part.¹⁵⁸

Even though the *Times* denied his dismissal because of the loss, the paper attributed it to the loss of faith in McDowell's abilities as a leader. If Union troops could not trust their commander, then how could they follow him into battle? That was the *Times*' reasoning for the dismissals of McDowell and Patterson.¹⁵⁹ Ironically, General McClellan became one of the most detested Union generals because of his slow-moving and overly cautious antics. Nevertheless, the placement of blame on McDowell and Patterson and their subsequent dismissals demonstrated the severe reaction garnered from the Union's loss at Bull Run. The replacement served to reinstate the troops' trust in their general and rehabilitate them for the next battle. This change, most argued, was greatly needed for the soldiers' morale and confidence.

157. General Banks replaced Patterson.

158. "General George B. McClellan," *Hartford Daily Times*, July 23, 1861.

159. "General George B. McClellan," *Hartford Daily Times*, July 23, 1861.

Joining in: New and Old Volunteers' Reasons to Enlist

With the army's strength and abilities in question, the northern states, even Connecticut, found it difficult to entice new enlistments or reenlistments. Though the day after Bull Run, men across the country rallied to the cause, recruiting men to enlist for three years after a major loss proved difficult. The Union's confidence was shaky at best and the citizens eligible to fight recognized and understood more greatly the dangers of war, as well as the honors. So, why would the men enlist after the Battle of Bull Run? Why would soldiers reenlist after having just lost a battle? Many of the reasons to enlist after Bull Run were similar or the same to those that soldiers referenced before Bull Run. Honor, celebrity, and other rationalities that related to praise and glory were common reasons to enlist, as they had been before Bull Run. The new enlistments saw the fame the Connecticut regiments received for acting so gallantly, so they enlisted with the hope of proving their own worthiness.¹⁶⁰

Citizens cited boredom and lack of work as reasons for enlisting in the army before and after the Union's defeat at Bull Run.¹⁶¹ Fry referenced multiple reasons for enlisting, but the most common he implied was the rationality "someone's got to go." Fry demonstrated this through Willie, the young man, who Fry implied, represented most young men at the time of Fort Sumter's fall. "Someone's got to go" remained a common cause for enlisting after Bull Run, especially now that a longer war was expected. In an October issue of the *Hartford Daily Courant*, an article was printed entitled "What can a man do better than enlist?"¹⁶² This article reasoned that men should enlist to pass time during the winter months. Why not enlist? Someone had to go, and it might as well have been the bored men out of work. Furthermore, the article

160. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 101.

161. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 28

162. "What Can a Man Do Better Than Enlist?," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 9, 1861.

calculated the benefits of enlisting, and with bounties and rations provided by the government the men made off pretty well. With the nonchalant attitude exhibited in the *Courant* article, perceptions of life as a soldier and the dangers of battle still seemed trivial despite Bull Run.¹⁶³

Patriotic feelings for their country after Bull Run may have overwhelmed other new recruits or reenlisting soldiers, thus inspiring them to enlist. The Union after such a loss was in great need for more men to defend and uphold the principles of the United States.

The wonderful uprising which followed the fall of Sumter was repeated after our bewildered volunteers surged back upon Washington. If the second rally was less ardent than the first, it was more deliberate and determined. Instead of a brief military recreation, men felt it to be a struggle for life; and every town in the State renewed its patriotic resolution, and every neighborhood responded to the recruiting drum... Enthusiasm rose to the level of the emergency.¹⁶⁴

For the men who had not enlisted in the three-month troops, those who believed they did not need to enlist or could not, they saw the desperation of the Union's situation after Bull Run. Now they understood that the ideals and principles in the Constitution and Declaration of Independence were in jeopardy, and they were not willing to risk their destruction. They realized that in order to save their livelihood and country, they needed to risk their own lives. By losing Bull Run, the idea of a short and easy war dissolved and became replaced with a real and tangible civil war. The reality of the situation set in, thus bringing about a strong patriotic reaction. This patriotic feeling, however, was not new to Connecticut's people; Connecticut had a history of involvement in major wars, like the American Revolution. Patriotism ran deep in their blood and was awoken by Fort Sumter's attack and Bull Run alike.

163. "What Can a Man Do Better Than Enlist?," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 9, 1861.

164. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 101.

Veteran Civil War soldiers felt great pressure from civilians to reenlist, but also from themselves. How could they desert the cause after such a loss? Despite the Connecticut soldiers' praiseworthy actions at Bull Run, the Union still lost, and that loss remained with the three-month regiments because it was their final battle fought while in service. Fry mentions that he and his fellow soldiers felt the failure of Bull Run following them. They had to erase its embarrassment by winning battles, thus turning their reputations as losers into winners. Pride was very important to these soldiers, and they did not want to go out on the bottom. They desired to better their reputations and reenlisting was the only way to do so. Fry reenlisted and became a member of the Fourteenth Connecticut Volunteer Regiment. He fought at Antietam and Gettysburg, two of the bloodiest battles in the Civil War, but he regarded Bull Run as the toughest battle. Fry said,

In my opinion a better class of soldiers and braver officers and men never left the State of Connecticut than the same three months' Connecticut Brigade, but the fortunes of war were against them; their only battle was a defeat, they were unsuccessful, consequently unpopular.¹⁶⁵

Stigma and loss plagued the soldiers of Connecticut's three-month regiments. They could not quit the army with such a reputation attached to themselves; honor and pride constituted some of the factors for their enlistment in the first place and they could not leave without obtaining them.¹⁶⁶

Most three-month soldiers and citizens expected the Connecticut soldiers who fought at Bull Run to reenlist. This expectation stemmed from the fact that they had the most battle experience in the army. These soldiers now seemed extremely valuable because they would not need training, they knew protocols, they were familiar with camp life, and they knew what to

165. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 84-85.

166. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 61.

expect in battle; soldiers like these made the army stronger. Assumptions and expectations of reenlistment greatly affected soldiers' decisions when their three-month term expired. After Fry and his Connecticut three-month comrades returned home for good or for the brief period before reenlistment, he noted the expectations the civilians had for them.

The [citizens of Connecticut] listened patiently to our stories of hardships in the camp and field; inquired just how we felt when we first came under fire on the battle-field; asked if all the rest of the Northern soldiers did as well as we did, if we didn't think we would have won the battle, and finally if we were going again. That last question was common property with everybody, irrespective of age, sex, or color. They all seemed to have an idea that it was exceedingly proper for the three months' men to enlist again. A great many of them did enlist again in the three years' regiments that were raised that fall...very few of them were satisfied with the rather doubtful laurels won at Bull Run, and before the war was over they were in the service again almost without an exception.¹⁶⁷

Most civilians saw no excuse for the three-month enlistments not to reenlist, unless they experienced some injury during their time in service. It was expected that for the good of the Union they would reenlist.

Many of the soldiers who reenlisted were given the opportunity to hold a higher rank. The three-month regiments had the greatest ability to do so, aside from officers in past wars. Colonel Terry, who commanded some of the Second Connecticut Volunteer Regiment, considered reenlisting because of the chance to advance his position in army ranks. Nine days after Bull Run, while the three-month Connecticut Regiments waited for transport back home, Terry wrote to his mother about reenlistment. He desired to know her thoughts on the subject "if he had a good situation." "The President," he wrote,

Has issued a circular to the members of Congress of each state asking them to nominate suitable persons from their own states for Brigadier Generals in the army to command

167. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 82.

volunteers. I think our delegation will put my name at the head of the list...it would be a great compliment.¹⁶⁸

Terry knew that General Tyler would not be nominated, despite his qualifications, so he believed himself to be next on the list.¹⁶⁹ For Terry, and other prospective officers from the three-month regiments, a promotion in the army was a great motivator to reenlist, as proved by the five hundred Connecticut soldiers, who were three-month enlistments that continued on to officer positions throughout the war.¹⁷⁰ Though Terry did not receive the nomination for Brigadier General immediately after Bull Run, the Government did give him the position as First Commander of the Seventh Connecticut Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which was an impressive position.¹⁷¹ It is important to note that Terry did become a Brigadier General and Major General in 1865, after carrying-out expeditions in North Carolina.¹⁷² Becoming a military officer gave men great pride; it demonstrated they exhibited qualities of good leadership, excellent military skills, and charisma. Furthermore, a promotion signified the Government's trust in a soldier. The hope of becoming an officer gave many three-month soldiers a strong incentive to reenlist and continue fighting for the Union cause.

Changing views of the war, as a result of Bull Run, led citizens and soldiers to consider the issue of slavery more seriously as a cause for fighting the South. Connecticut appeared to be leaning towards an abolitionist cause for participating in the war, but had not fully reached that position. As a state that abolished slavery very near to the start of the Civil War (1848),¹⁷³

168. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 31 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

169. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 31 July 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

170. Fry, "Wooden Nutmegs" at Bull Run, 82.

171. Horace A. Smith, *Cruel War and Cursed Rebellion: the Civil War Letters of Samuel Bliss, Seventh Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, an Annotated Collection* (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994), 7.

172. Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

173. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 26.

citizens and soldiers of Connecticut accepted the end of slavery in their own state, but were wary of attempting to force others to eliminate the peculiar institution. Because of Connecticut's split between the two political parties and its racist history, Connecticut erred on the conservative side in regards to slavery's abolition. For them, less was more. After Bull Run, some soldiers and citizens believed that a new cause would help rally others to enlist and fight against the Confederacy who so desperately depended on slavery for survival; so, slavery became a more important cause to the war.

As Willie, the soldier from Fry's Fort Sumter story, proved that the slavery cause existed before Bull Run, some soldiers and citizens began to believe that ending slavery was the answer to the Union's problems. First, the South depended upon slavery to keep their agricultural economy going; without slavery, their plantation system, they believed, would fail. Second, Northerners believed that by abolishing slavery, they could rally former slaves to their cause and have them work for or enlist them in the Union army. Two reasons which led some Northerners, including soldiers, to support abolishing slavery in the South. Such rationalizations demonstrate the desperation created by Bull Run. Connecticut soldiers looked to a much smaller issue, such as abolishing slavery, and made it more prevalent because they believed they needed more reasons to fight after Bull Run. The blow Bull Run caused brought up the idea of a possible military necessity for abolishing slavery.¹⁷⁴ Some supported it for military reasons and others for moral ones, either way people began to believe in the necessity of ending slavery. A Connecticut soldier after being in the South for quite some time stated in a home letter, "I was never half an

174. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 2.

abolitionist until I came here and saw slavery in its full bloom. If the government dares not put an end to it now, it will be no government worth fighting for.”¹⁷⁵

Bull Run forced more people to look at the option of abolishing slavery. The *Hartford Daily Times* ran an article on August 15, 1861 entitled “The Slavery Question and the Government,” which focused on General Butler’s proclamation deeming slaves “contraband” of war.¹⁷⁶ Since the South labeled slaves as property, Butler reasoned that taking them as contraband fell under the rules of war. As a man who believed in the immorality of slavery, this was Butler’s way to free the slaves. The Union government cautiously supported this action, and so the Civil War began to focus more greatly on the slave institution.¹⁷⁷ The support from the government may have been fueled by the desire to sway British allegiance to the Union side; the British detested slavery and had abolished it decades earlier.¹⁷⁸

This is not to say that everyone in the Union supported the gradual emancipation of slaves in the South, many did not. The *Times* would go on to point out the great difference between what Lincoln said the war was about, the unity of the North and South, and the slave cause now arising, which Lincoln adamantly stated was not the purpose of the war.¹⁷⁹ Butler’s invocation of contraband as a reason to free the slaves, however, demonstrated that slavery, as an issue in the war, held more power than it had before Bull Run. People looked for new inspiration for the war after failure in the battle, and the pursuit of abolishing slavery was a cause to fight for, for many people.¹⁸⁰ Most of the rationalities and reasons behind enlistment and reenlistment

175. “Soldiers’ Letters,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, November 23, 1861.

176. “The Slavery Question and the Government,” *Hartford Daily Times*, August 15, 1861.

177. “The Slavery Question and the Government,” *Hartford Daily Times*, August 15, 1861.

178. “The Position of England,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, December 18, 1861.

179. “The Salvation of the Republic,” *Hartford Daily Times*, October 7, 1861.

180. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 279.

were echoes of those from before the Battle of Bull Run. However, Bull Run and the Union's loss clearly heightened these convictions.

Camp Life After the Battle of Bull Run

Once the new recruits enlisted and many three-month soldiers reenlisted, the new regiments left their comfortable Connecticut homes and went to live as soldiers at camp. Soldiers who had reenlisted experienced a sort of déjà vu; only a few months before they left Connecticut to cheers and journeyed to the Union capital. As they left Connecticut, the crowd cheered and celebrated their bravery once again. Terry, Fry and other soldiers alike reenlisted and lived as soldiers. From soldiers' letters home, speeches and correspondence printed in newspapers, and reports on camp life, life as a soldier seemed to change very little after Bull Run. Aside from the places where soldiers were stationed, drilling, scouting, picket guard duties, discomfort, good spirits, and leaving at a moments notice still comprised a soldier's life while at camp. The only severe change that occurred as a result of Bull Run was the prevalence of army hospitals for the wounded and dying. Soldiers had not yet dealt with a large mass of wounded or dead comrades; Bull Run changed that for good. Even so, life as a soldier remained predictable and difficult.

The new recruits and reenlistments had to go through drilling in Connecticut, they waited for their equipment and provisions, they traveled to Washington D.C., and then into the South. Soldiers went through the same series of events as the three-month enlistments had earlier.¹⁸¹ The *Times* and the *Courant* continued to argue over the status and comfort of troops. Two days after Bull Run, the *Times* printed a scathing article about the *Courant's* false information

181. "The Fifth Regiment," *Hartford Daily Times*, July 24, 1861.

regarding the preparation and movement of the Fifth Regiment.¹⁸² Both papers would contest each other's war information for the duration of the Civil War. The *Times*, generally, attempted to paint the Union government as incompetent and uncaring towards the troops. The *Courant*, on the other hand, portrayed the government as a strong, functional, and prepared body. The truth of the matter was that as more regiments went to Washington, more inexperienced soldiers learned of the uncomfortable conditions of military life in wartime.

Nothing had changed from before Bull Run regarding the Union government's preparation to provide for and arm the soldiers. Soldiers Aid Societies and Associations continued to pick up the slack of the Union government and provide for soldiers amenities and comforts from home that they so dearly missed. As the war continued on more societies formed and began to act as sponsors to specific regiments or companies, people of one town would take it upon themselves to send men of a specific company bedding, clothing, and first aid for example.¹⁸³ The Government, not surprisingly, also constantly failed to pay soldiers their bounties on time. Terry often worried that his troops would get paid late, resulting in bad feelings or disturbances at camp. Both soldiers, before and after Bull Run, depended on receiving their pay so they could settle debts accumulating at home.¹⁸⁴ Despite money difficulties, the soldiers and government further prepared for war.

New regiments sent to Washington quickly moved across the Potomac into rebel territory to ready themselves for the next battle. By September 19, 1861, Connecticut sent their Seventh

182. "The Fifth Regiment," *Hartford Daily Times*, July 24, 1861.

183. "The Soldiers Aid Association," *Hartford Daily Times*, December 19, 1861.

184. Alfred Terry to Mother, 26 October 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

Volunteer Regiment to war, and prepared to fill up a few more.¹⁸⁵ However, not all troops went to enemy territory, the government sent the Eighth and Tenth Connecticut Volunteer Regiments to Annapolis, Maryland, while others went to defend Washington.¹⁸⁶ After Bull Run, a fear arose of a residual attack on the capital. Terry stayed in Washington for a month before preparing his troops to move to Annapolis to catch a tugboat that would take them to Hampton, Virginia, and then to Hilton Head, South Carolina. No matter where he and his troops were, Terry always noted, “all my men are in good spirits and cheerfully respond to the order to get ready.”¹⁸⁷ Troops still, despite the loss at Bull Run, found excitement at getting nearer to their final destination for battle against the Confederate troops. Orders to move were still given to Terry with little notice, soldiers’ preparation to leave on the fly was necessary in army life and very common.¹⁸⁸

A major change within camp life after Bull Run was the newly present and popular Temperance Movement amongst soldiers, especially officers. As the pressures of nearing battles increased soldiers understandably turned to alcohol to allay their fears. Alcohol consumption hurt their performances in their everyday soldier duties, especially drilling. Because of this, a temperance movement supported by soldiers, officers, and citizens alike, swept through the Union military camps.¹⁸⁹ The saying was that temperance makes a good soldier and an even

185. “Military,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, September 19, 1861.

186. “The Tenth Connecticut Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, November 2, 1861.

187. Alfred Terry to Mammy, 31 September 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

188. Alfred Terry to Mother, 26 October 1861, Alfred Howe Terry papers, box 1, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

189. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 119.

better officer.¹⁹⁰ The movement had a strong affect on soldiers and definitely helped improve their performance at camp and on the battlefield.

In the remaining months of 1861 after Bull Run, Connecticut soldiers participated in a few battles. The Union government, citizens, and soldiers all desired greatly to erase the ghost of Bull Run and the only way to do so was to fight in and win another battle. The *Courant* wrote of the importance of winning a battle. In the article “A Victory Wanted – Badly,” the author argued,

Here we have spent some hundreds of millions of dollars; some six months of time; a vast amount of patience in collecting, equipping, and drilling our forces, and have got together some three hundred thousand men...we have nothing but the bitter mortification of the Bull Run affair to chew upon; it has seemed as if there were “no luck about our house;” our military position is vastly inferior to what it was six months ago.¹⁹¹

Soldiers and citizens felt demoralized after the Union’s loss. The only way to rectify this would be to fight in another battle and win it. This would help morale and recruiting. Without a win, soldiers saw the dangers and lack of glory in joining the army.¹⁹² Connecticut soldiers battled in November when the Seventh Regiment and many others took the forts on Hilton Head, South Carolina. They were met with heavy opposition at sea, while they waited to attack the forts. Their reinforcement gunboats came to bombard the Rebels’ Navy guarding the forts and when they did the Rebels in the forts soon retreated from the island.¹⁹³ The Connecticut troops and the Union finally had their win and soldiers and citizens finally had something to celebrate. The soldiers happily took advantage of the provisions on the island, digging into sweet potatoes and

190. “Temperance Movement in the Fourth Connecticut Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, September 12, 1861.

191. “A Victory Wanted – Badly,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 18, 1861.

192. George W. Rogers to Alfred Terry, November 16, 1861, 2. Connecticut Historical Society.

193. “Letter from the Seventh Regiment,” *Hartford Daily Times*, November 18, 1861.

fresh meat.¹⁹⁴ Reports of jubilant soldiers uplifted spirits across the Union. Soon after the Union won another smaller battle near Pikeville, Kentucky, continuing to elevate spirits.¹⁹⁵

As December 1861 rolled around, newspapers, government officials, soldiers, and citizens looked back at the past year, what the war brought, and how Connecticut participated in it. The *Times* wrote an article about Connecticut's contributions to the war thus far.

The truth is, Connecticut has done more for the war, according to her population, than any other State of the Union. Let the comparison, by per centage of population, be made with any other State, and we venture that our assertion will be proved true.¹⁹⁶

Other states, larger states, had questioned Connecticut's dedication to the cause, but there clearly was no reason for that. In the *Times*' summary of Connecticut's participation in the war on December 7, 1861, the numbers speak for themselves. In 1860 the Connecticut population was near 460,000 people.¹⁹⁷ The population eligible for service in 1860, men ages between fifteen and fifty, was 118,041.¹⁹⁸ By the end of 1861 Connecticut had sent a total of 18,029 soldiers off to war – meaning over fifteen percent of the eligible population enlisted. Additionally, Connecticut furnished their own regiments with arms, provisions, and horses – they even provided arms for other states. This level of participation and commitment demonstrates Connecticut citizens' belief in the Union cause.

The definition of the "Union cause" varied greatly for those who enlisted in the army. Before and after Bull Run rationalities behind enlistment remained constant. Connecticut men felt public pressure to enlist, they believed they had to go, they wanted slavery abolished, they were in search of fame, and so on. Bull Run did not alter these justifications. Similarly, life as a

194. "Letter from the Seventh Regiment," *Hartford Daily Times*, November 18, 1861.

195. "The Pikeville Battle," *Hartford Daily Courant*, November 18, 1861.

196. "Connecticut and the War," *Hartford Daily Times*, September 19, 1861.

197. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 7.

198. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 5.

soldier barely differed. With the exception of the temperance movement, drilling, training, preparation for battle, and fighting in actual battles continued to fill soldiers' days. Descriptions of soldiers' good spirits and poor living conditions lasted until the end of the war. Bull Run had little impact on the soldiers' lives in the sense that it did not change their reasons for enlisting or life at camp. Numerous historians claimed that the Union defeat at the Battle of Bull Run shook the Union to its core. Bull Run did shatter Union hopes for a short and easy war and it did slow enlistments ever so slightly, but for the soldiers who enlisted before or within six months of the battle, it brought few new reasons to enlist and only slightly changed their lives at camp, truly it most significantly altered their outlook on the war.¹⁹⁹

199. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 70.

Chapter Three

Connecticut Politics: A Brief History and the Opening Months of the Civil War

[Peace Democrats], then, were the leading Connecticut opponents of the war. Men of ability, community leaders, they refused to adapt themselves to new conditions, and were completely unyielding in their political views. On their determination to restore the past as they knew it, the Copperheads risked their reputations, their wealth, even their personal freedom. Brave, bitter reactionaries, they were loyal to a polity that no longer existed. Quite obviously, such men were as ignorant of Southern intentions as they were of Northern ones. In a very real sense they had become aliens in their own land.²⁰⁰

Early in the morning of April 12, 1861, Cyrus Northrop wrote a letter to girlfriend, Libbie, to share with her his exciting news. The Republicans of the Connecticut House of Representatives had decided to nominate him as their clerk.²⁰¹ Little did Northrop know that his good news would soon be darkened by the outbreak of the Civil War; the very next day, Charleston Harbor opened fire on Fort Sumter, marking the start of the Civil War. Despite the start of hostilities, Northrop's letters to Libbie expressed his desire to see her and detailed his day-to-day activities as Clerk; his letters barely referenced the war.²⁰² Although Northrop largely ignored the looming conflict, President Lincoln's proclamation, calling for over 75,000 equipped troops from northern states, forced him to deal with a range of war-related issues. Connecticut's politicians were split, and harbored both pro-war and anti-war sentiments; the responsibility for bridging this political split and fulfilling the state's troop quota fell to Governor William A. Buckingham.²⁰³

200. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 296.

201. Cyrus Northrop to Libbie, 12 April 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

202. Cyrus Northrop to Libbie, 4 May 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

203. "Governor's Message," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 2, 1861.

Connecticut Republicans and War Democrats (pro-war), and Peace Democrats (anti-war) disagreed on slavery, secession, and coercing the South back into the Union even before Fort Sumter fell to the Confederates. As tension across the Union arose from political changes such as the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Dred Scott Decision, the opposition between the Connecticut political parties became more pronounced.²⁰⁴ The 1859 gubernatorial and state congressional elections proved that the state was nearing a more equal political divide. Buckingham had won the gubernatorial election by 2,000 to 2,500 votes. The Republican representative candidates received over fifty percent of the seats, whereas the Democrats won around forty-one percent. Similar numbers constituted the state Senate outcome, showing that while Republicans were the majority, it was not a significantly huge divide between the two parties.²⁰⁵ Thanks to the state's strong political division, many in the nation looked to Connecticut's gubernatorial election as an indicator of the 1860 national presidential election.²⁰⁶

Connecticut's unique political situation resulted from the state's tumultuous political history causing the Battle of Bull Run to affect and alter Connecticut's political sphere and the people in it in a distinct manner. Connecticut, unlike its New England counterparts, housed a strong Democratic Party, one that consisted of a small faction supporting the Peace Movement and larger portion that favored war. Why did the Democrats in Connecticut have such prevalence? What impact did their influence have over the state? How did Connecticut's political past affect its political reaction to the Battle of Bull Run? The answers to these questions reveal how Connecticut's political scene uniquely shaped the state's actions and responses to the Battle

204. Samuel G. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham: The War Governor of Connecticut* (Springfield: W.F. Adams Company, Publishers, 1894), 36.

205. "Senators – The Republicans," *Hartford Daily Courant*, April 6, 1861.

206. J. Robert Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut during the Civil War* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1941), 109.

of Bull Run. The Union's loss, ultimately, created a new political landscape in Connecticut as a result of the state's political history.

A Brief Political History of Connecticut

Following the Hartford Convention of 1814, in which a group of elected delegates “came together with the alleged aim of concluding a separate peace treaty with Britain and seceding from the Union”²⁰⁷ during the War of 1812, few nationally notable political events occurred in Connecticut until the 1850s. Similar to the rest of New England, Connecticut abolitionists created antislavery and abolitionist societies, while others, who were more moderate, created colonization societies. Politically, Connecticut moved slowly in regards to slave emancipation, it was more in line with the Mid-Atlantic States; the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison called Connecticut the “Georgia of New England.”²⁰⁸ By the early 1850s, Connecticut's citizens largely abandoned the Whig Party and shifted towards the Democratic Party, the Free Soilers, and the Know Nothing Party, demonstrating the instability of politics in the state.²⁰⁹ The Kansas-Nebraska Act worried most northern citizens because it revoked the Missouri Compromise of 1820.²¹⁰ They saw the Kansas-Nebraska Act's allowance of slavery North of the 36° 30' line as the final straw; they believed that it demonstrated the strength and power the southern slave states held over the nation.²¹¹ Connecticut's citizens resented the ever-expanding southern power and hated the Kansas-Nebraska Act for providing the South with even more leeway in regards to

207. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 14.

208. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 22.

209. Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut*, 29.

210. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 123.

211. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 35.

slavery. After Congress passed the Act, Connecticut Democrats lost much of their public support because of their party's connection to the Act.²¹²

The Republican Party, however, began to flourish around 1857 when the Supreme Court ruled the Dred Scott decision and allowed slavery in the territories. Republicans opposed the expansion of slavery because it increased the strength of the South and harmed the free laborer's status in the North.²¹³ As a growing industrial state, Connecticut strongly disliked the implications of slavery's expansion into northern territories, which meant white laborers losing their jobs; as a result Connecticut began to vote Republican. Aside from antislavery and pro-industrial voters, Connecticut's large Republican following could also be attributed to the influx of immigrants that occurred in the early 1850s. These Irish, German Catholic, and French Canadian immigrants went to Connecticut in the hopes becoming a part of its growing industry; as such they voted Republican and helped the Party grow in strength.²¹⁴

In 1858 Connecticut elected William A. Buckingham, a Republican, as its governor by a fair majority of 2,449 votes. The shift towards the Republican Party was also reflected in the General Assembly elections. The Democrats, however, had kept control of a significant amount of seats in the General Assembly²¹⁵ Why? In the years leading up to the Civil War, Connecticut's economy was largely made up of farming and agriculture. Though Connecticut was in the process of transforming into an industrial state, the farmers of Connecticut still comprised a good portion of the state's population. These farmers (and even many of the manufacturers) benefitted from their relationship with the southern states, which provided them with numerous goods, so

212. Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut*, 41.

213. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 39.

214. Joanna D. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent: Civil War Democrats in Connecticut," *The New England Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (1983), 540.

215. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 32-33.

the possibility of war meant losing business.²¹⁶ For these reasons, the farmers and other businessmen disliked the idea of war against the South.

A strong Democratic presence in Connecticut can also be attributed to general Connecticut views on race and slavery. Connecticut's citizens as a whole never exhibited an enormous amount of support for abolition or black equality. Though the numbers of slaves in Connecticut lessened significantly by the 1830s, slavery was not officially outlawed until 1848, significantly later than other New England states.²¹⁷ When the Connecticut Legislature abolished slavery, it freed only a half-dozen blacks; clearly the institution had become unimportant to the state's economy, so why had it taken so long for Connecticut to officially eliminate it?²¹⁸ Their apprehension towards ridding the state of slavery could be attributed to the rabid racism that existed in Connecticut from its origins and onwards. Its white citizens disliked the idea of coexisting with free blacks, they fought against allowing blacks any rights (even after the Civil War), and while the abolition movement grew across the state an even greater effort to stop it burgeoned.²¹⁹ In the years leading up to the Civil War, Connecticut made conciliatory efforts with the southern slave states in order to keep them happy. Some men, like ex-Governor Thomas Seymour (a Democrat), believed in the importance of keeping the South in the Union for the benefit of the North despite the slave institution.²²⁰

As tensions between the sections rose, so did the worry over the 1860 presidential election. It was imperative to each section that a president who held their beliefs was voted into office. The Republican and Democratic parties of Connecticut realized the state elections'

216. Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut*, 112.

217. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 26.

218. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 26.

219. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 2.

220. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 7.

importance, and so they campaigned accordingly. Young members of the Republican Party formed the “Wide Awakes Club,” which strove to gain the support of young voters; the Democrats did the same with “Seymour clubs.”²²¹ The Connecticut Democrats and Republicans even recruited help from major, out-of-state politicians. Abraham Lincoln, future presidential candidate, made numerous speeches in Connecticut for the Republican Party.²²² The campaign efforts and strength of each party proved to be very effective because Buckingham (the Republican candidate) won against Seymour by only 541 votes demonstrating the near equal political split in Connecticut. However, the gubernatorial and General Assembly elections were indicative of the state’s leaning towards the Republican Party.²²³ Such a narrow defeat, though, suggests that while the Republicans held a greater favor in early 1860, the Democrats still had a chance of prevailing through hard campaigning in the presidential election.²²⁴

The Connecticut outcome of the 1860 presidential election mimicked that of the gubernatorial election earlier that year. Of the total 77,292 ballots submitted in Connecticut, Douglas got 15,522 and his fellow Democrat, Breckenridge, secured 14,641 for a combined anti-Lincoln vote of 33,500. Lincoln prevailed with 43,792, a majority of 10,292.²²⁵ Even if the Democratic Party had not been split between Douglas and Breckinridge, Lincoln still would have won the election in Connecticut. The nearly equal number of votes between Douglas and Breckenridge showed an arising division between the Democrats. Those who voted for Douglas would likely become War Democrats during the Civil War, a moderate faction that objected to Lincoln’s war policies, but disliked the idea of the secession and the Confederacy more. These

221. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 50.

222. Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut*, 118.

223. J. Doyle DeWitt, *Lincoln in Hartford* (Hartford: Hartford, 1960), 15.

224. Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut*, 122.

225. Lane, *A Political History of Connecticut*, 139.

Democrats would support much of Buckingham's and the Republican Party's policies during the war.²²⁶ They had favored popular sovereignty previously, but would rather have industrialization than an economy dependent on slavery and plantations.²²⁷

The Peace Democrats, also known as the "dissidents," had voted for Breckenridge (the candidate favored in the South).²²⁸ Peace Democrats gained much of their support in a grassroots movement that swept through Connecticut's rural towns.²²⁹ Their faction, primarily composed of white rural citizens (not immigrants),²³⁰ related to the Southern society, its principles, and its economy, more greatly than to the industrialized North. Furthermore, its supporters needed the southern "raw goods market" in order to make money.²³¹ They also feared that war meant the destruction of American principles outlined by Jefferson; they believed the government "should remain a loose federation of semiautonomous states" and that the Federal Government should not involve itself unless necessary.²³² Such differences between the two factions of the Democratic Party created a division that aided in Lincoln's election.

Lincoln's win of the 1860 presidential election led to the secession of South Carolina, followed by that of numerous other southern states. The northern states made conciliatory efforts to convince the slave states to remain in the Union; Lincoln stated that he did not want to abolish slavery, and even if he wanted to it was constitutionally impossible to do so.²³³ But, nothing could persuade the select slave states to rejoin or remain in the Union. As recommended by

226. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 539.

227. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 539.

228. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 540.

229. John E. Talmadge, "A Peace Movement in Civil War Connecticut," *The New England Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (1964), 318.

230. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 540.

231. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 539.

232. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 539.

233. Lincoln, "First Inaugural Address," 80.

Virginia, a peace convention was held in Washington where twenty-one states convened and discussed peace resolutions that protected slavery and catered to the South.²³⁴ Governor Buckingham sent Connecticut delegates to the convention with the instruction to make concessions to restore harmony in the Union, while maintaining the dignity of the government. Buckingham instructed that if the Southern delegates desired more protection for slavery, it should be given to them.²³⁵

It is certainly to the credit of Connecticut that from the first she discerned the true issue, and that her delegation, her Legislature, and her governor were one in their determination to meet the crisis whatever it might be.²³⁶

Even before the Civil War began, Connecticut's government and governor demonstrated their eagerness to help quell the conflict. Sending delegates to the convention was Buckingham's appeasement to the Democrats of the state that favored peace, their strength and power in Connecticut had influenced him to send delegates.

The Start of War: Initial Reactions and Rising Tension

Governor Buckingham's actions towards the Washington peace convention were reflective of his and Connecticut's future involvement in the war. He put all his support behind the Union and Lincoln whether for peace or war. Before Lincoln's inauguration, Buckingham had ordered arms and equipment for five thousand men, preparing for an impending conflict.²³⁷ Immediately after Fort Sumter's fall and Lincoln's call to arms, Buckingham began to mobilize Connecticut's troops and fill its required quota of one regiment, then another.²³⁸ The state so

234. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 78-80.

235. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 79.

236. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 92.

237. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 40.

238. "More regiments wanted," *Hartford Daily Courant*, April 23, 1861.

easily filled the first few required regiments that volunteers had to be turned away.²³⁹

Furthermore, banks and the Legislature provided Buckingham with over two million dollars to spend at will for the war.²⁴⁰ The actions taken by Buckingham and the rallying support given by the Legislature, banks, and towns moved and inspired Connecticut citizens to donate money, enlist and fight for the Union cause.²⁴¹

Governor Buckingham had numerous duties to fulfill while in office especially at the start of the war. He needed to ensure that the troop quota was filled, to spend his war money wisely, and to keep order. Buckingham threw his full support behind the war cause first by filling Connecticut's military quota.²⁴² He also made sure to facilitate the arms Lincoln's proclamations called for. He even went so far as to buy weapons from Europe to ensure that all Connecticut troops were prepared to fight.²⁴³ He called on the women of Connecticut to sew uniforms and provide other necessary amenities. Buckingham made a true attempt to prepare the troops and the state for war.²⁴⁴ He likely devoted himself so greatly to Lincoln and the war effort because of two reasons; first, Lincoln had come a year before to campaign on Buckingham's behalf in the 1860 gubernatorial election and the two had become good friends. Second, Buckingham believed the war was imminent and secession wrong, so he acted accordingly by readying the state.

Some Connecticut citizens, however, believed that war was not the answer to the Union's problems and that the South's secession was wrong, but legitimate.²⁴⁵ The Democratic newspaper the *Hartford Daily Times* supported the South's right to secede by referencing the

239. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 131.

240. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 130.

241. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 47-50.

242. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 128-129.

243. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 141.

244. "The Governor's Message," *Hartford Daily Times*, May 1, 1861.

245. Wood Gray, *The Hidden Civil War: The Story of the Copperheads* (New York: The Viking Press, 1942), 146.

American Revolution and the United States' independence from Great Britain – a precedent for separation. An article in the *Times* reasoned that the Union needed a compromise between “friendly states” or it could not exist.²⁴⁶ The same paper also published a letter, in an article, written by Hartford's (Peace) Democratic Mayor, Henry C. Deming who declined to participate on a war committee. Though in his letter, Deming professed patriotic feelings and love for his country, the article's author understood that Deming, after much thought, concluded that a treaty of peace was best for the Union and Confederacy.²⁴⁷ Deming wrote,

I can look upon such a war with no emotions but those of horror and should be false to convictions of my understanding and to every emotion of my nature, if I assisted in initiating it...Now I most firmly and conscientiously believe that a better treaty, with fairer and more equitable terms, can be secured before than after such a war, and that all the interests of civilization and humanity require that conservative men of all parties should unite in adjusting our present difficulties by negotiation and compromise.²⁴⁸

Such sentiments received support from the Peace Democrats in Connecticut. Deming, like ex-Governor Seymour, desired to prevent the war and allow the seceded states to remain outside of the Union where they would have political and economic prosperity. These Democrats could not believe that Governor Buckingham wanted to send Connecticut citizens to fight in the war.²⁴⁹

Norman Brigham, a Mansfield Democrat candidate for the Connecticut Legislature, wrote a letter that was published by a South Carolinian newspaper. In his letter, Brigham stated his outrage at Lincoln, Republicans, and abolitionists. Most of all, Brigham discussed his sympathy with the South. He claimed the right to secession followed the precedent of the Revolutionary War, and because of this, the northern Republicans were the true nullifiers of the Constitution.²⁵⁰

Brigham also believed that Republicans were acting as “fanatics” out to get the Democrats in the

246. “Disgraceful Position of *Hartford Times*,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, April 15, 1861.

247. “Mayor Deming's Letter,” *Hartford Daily Times*, April 18, 1861.

248. “Mayor Deming's Letter,” *Hartford Daily Times*, April 18, 1861.

249. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 40.

250. “A Connecticut Democrat,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 3, 1861.

Union. Such conspiracy theories rattled the Union and caused even more turmoil between the two major parties. Southerners and Peace Democrats who read propaganda like this trusted what the authors wrote and consequently became more paranoid.²⁵¹

The initial reactions of both parties demonstrated the political divide that existed in Connecticut, one that widened, as a result of the war. The Republican politicians and most War Democrats responded to the war like Governor Buckingham; they organized war meetings, gathered enlistments, and raised money for equipment and arms. The Peace Democrats, on the other hand, denounced the war and Governor Buckingham's actions of support. These initial reactions illustrate a small view into the political turmoil caused by the start of the Civil War; politicians had formed their opinions on it before any major Connecticut legislation was passed regarding the war. The two political parties faced a great and enduring debate over war laws. Politicians who mused about the future of their state and country peered down a murky and difficult road that would lead one of the most trying political periods in Connecticut.

1861 May Session of the Connecticut Legislature

Cyrus Northrop received his nomination as clerk of the House of Representatives on the first day of the May Session of the Connecticut Legislature. This was no ordinary day for the Connecticut General Assembly, for it was the first day they had met since the start of the Civil War. May 1, 1861 was a day filled with activity for the Legislature as Northrop noted in his letter to his girlfriend Libbie. Despite the business of the day, Northrop believed the session of the Legislature would be short – no “more than four weeks at the longest.” He noted of his fellow

251. “A Connecticut Democrat,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 3, 1861.

politicians: “the House of Representatives this year is an able body though hardly as pleasant as the last year.”²⁵²

Governor Buckingham wasted no time after the Legislature convened. His first matter of business was to ask for the rights to enlist 10,000 more men and prepare them for war. Surprisingly, the opposition party did not try to stop this quick mobilization and adopted all measures that Buckingham requested.²⁵³ It appeared that at the beginning of the May Session in the Legislature, both parties attempted to cooperate; Governor Buckingham even tried to be conciliatory to the Democrats. In fact, when Governor Buckingham moved to be given the full abilities and control of Connecticut enlistments, not one person voted against this measure, demonstrating the politicians’ confidence in Buckingham’s judgment and abilities. In a letter to President Lincoln, Governor Buckingham described the success of Connecticut’s first piece of war legislation. He wrote,

Allow me to say that this appropriation was made by the unanimous vote of both houses, and indicates the sentiment of the citizens of this state, and their determination in the strongest and most positive position which you will assume in defence of the authority of the government.²⁵⁴

The Legislature’s unanimous vote suggests strong unification or at least civility between the Democrats and Republicans before the Battle of Bull Run. Throughout the war, Governor Buckingham often wrote to Lincoln about the happenings in Connecticut, specifically regarding troop enlistment. He also conveyed his support for Lincoln and the national government. In his speech to the Legislature, Buckingham spoke of the oncoming war and his actions thus far to

252. Cyrus Northrop to Libbie, 4 May 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

253. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 155.

254. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 159.

prepare for it. He told of his and the citizens' undying loyalty to Connecticut and the Union and how inspiring their actions have been. He stated,

Reference has been made to the loyalty of the citizens of this State to its government. Allegiance is equally due to the National Government. That Government was established by the people, for their benefit and protection. Under it, we have extended in territory, increased in population, in wealth, and in all which contributes to make a people intelligent prosperous and powerful, with a rapidity hitherto unknown in the history of our race...Nor should it excite surprise...that our citizens often differ, widely and strenuously, on questions of policy affecting their respective interests. Such difference is no crime. It is but the exercise of a right guaranteed to every citizen by the fundamental law of the land. So long as this right is expressed within constitutional limitations, its tendencies are conservative and healthful. But, when opposition to specific measures of policy, becomes hostility to the Constitution itself, repudiating its obligations and spurning its sanctions it is at once transformed into treason and rebellion. Such is secession.²⁵⁵

Buckingham's words in the General Assembly garnered much support from his fellow politicians, demonstrating Connecticut's initial political feelings about the war. In this passage, Buckingham highlighted one of the main northern arguments against secession that the Constitution "was established by the people," not a Union of states as many in the South claimed. Connecticut Republicans and many Democrats readied their troops for war.

The legislators got to work on bills regarding the war. In mid-May, Northrop wrote in a letter to Libbie that the House of Representatives had "quite a debate on a War Bill," but aside from that he only wrote of his love for his girlfriend.²⁵⁶ Perhaps this is telling of his lack of interest or worry about the war. Though Northrop obviously found being a part of the Connecticut Legislature important, his letters suggest that he was more interested in writing to his girlfriend than current politics. When corresponding with Libbie, Northrop briefly touched on the General Assembly's happenings. Consequently, in her letters, Libbie also rarely wrote about

255. "The Governor's Message," *Hartford Daily Times*, May 1, 1861.

256. Cyrus Northrop to Libbie, 13 May 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

war or politics, but rather about the home, church, and her love for Northrop. The content of Libbie's letters might imply that Northrop and she understood political discussions were not appropriate for women to participate in.²⁵⁷

Northrop continued his correspondence with his girlfriend throughout the May Session of the Connecticut Legislature. On May 13, 1861, Northrop wrote that the Legislature had moved to create a "financial bill authorizing the treasurer to issue State Bonds" and that "a military bill is the 'order of the day tomorrow.'" Northrop noted that the war matters made up the bulk of the House of Representatives focus for the session.²⁵⁸ The goal of the Legislature's majority, after all, was to be efficient and to help form a well-organized military force.²⁵⁹ A military board and committee were to be organized by the General Assembly to examine possible military officers and to ensure that those with exceptional skills represented Connecticut in the military.²⁶⁰ Additionally, the committee would examine matters such as the state and efficiency of the equipment given to the soldiers; as the *Times* suggested, necessities provided to soldiers were not of the best quality.²⁶¹

The Legislature also focused on the "military bounty" meant to repay soldiers for their services. The bounties provided by towns and the state intended also to help support soldiers' families left behind.²⁶² On the subject, the *Courant* wrote, "No New England soldier fights for money; but such as are broken down by the casualties of war ought to be freely assisted, and

257. Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

258. Cyrus Northrop to Libbie, 13 May 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

259. "The Governor's Message," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 2, 1861.

260. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 22, 1861.

261. "General Assembly," *Hartford Daily Courant*, May 19, 1861.

262. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 60.

every comfort that money will command should be freely tendered.”²⁶³ It was believed by the Legislature and the public that the ten dollars a month given to soldiers was too little for their efforts on the battlefield – “don’t forsake those brave boys who have gone to fight your battles,” was the rationalization held by citizens of Connecticut.²⁶⁴

Connecticut Peace Democrats used soldiers’ meager pay as solid evidence of the Republican Party’s failures. A speech given by Mayor Deming, a Peace Democrat, in the House of Representatives called out Governor Buckingham on this issue; he said, “Under these circumstances, this *unpatriotic* Governor, who has no sense of justice to the soldier or desire to continue the war when it becomes a war of aggression and not of defence.”²⁶⁵ Such a scathing review of Buckingham’s work, despite his extreme dedication to the war cause, alludes to the name-calling and blows both parties resorted to in order hurt their opposition. Of course, Mayor Deming was more likely to be called “unpatriotic” than the Governor, as he was a Peace Democrat and whole-heartedly against the war; it seemed as if he was trying to deflect the charges of disloyalty against himself by shifting attention to Buckingham. He also insinuated that Buckingham’s support of the war dwindled once it turned into an offensive war, thus changing Buckingham’s take on it, but this was clearly a fabrication as Buckingham encouraged volunteers, purchased weapons, and funded the war, demonstrating his unwavering dedication for Lincoln and the war. The Connecticut Legislature’s May Session addressed the issues regarding the war despite political disagreements. Though the session lasted much longer than Northrop expected, it brought up and fixed numerous important war issues and ultimately demonstrated Connecticut’s support for the Federal Government, Lincoln, and the war effort.

263. “The Military Bounty,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 11, 1861.

264. “Connecticut Legislature,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 8, 1861.

265. “Speech of Mr. Deming,” *Hartford Daily Times*, June 11, 1861.

Action and Response: the Peace Democrats and the Pro-War Politicians

Deming's speech against Buckingham was just one of many made against Republicans in an attempt to undermine, sabotage, or stop them from gaining supporters. As the war continued on the Peace Democrats became more outspoken and angered by the situation. They declared their positions on the war through publicized speeches, protests, and demonstrations. They made it a point to expose Republican papers when they felt Democrats were being misrepresented or villainized. Essentially, throughout the war the Connecticut Peace Democrats were a discontented and vocal group.²⁶⁶ While the Peace Democrats aired their dissent of the war, their counterparts, the War Democrats (also known as Union Democrats) quietly supported the Republican Party.²⁶⁷

The war backlash from the Peace Democrats began slowly, but escalated after it was clear that the war would not be won quickly or easily. While Republicans were busy creating bills and laws to progress the war effort, the Democrats found ways to undermine their authority and reputation. When a friend of ex-Governor Seymour's asked Seymour to secure him a position in Samuel Colt's (of arms-making fame) regiment of rifleman, Seymour declined to help him. He said to his friend, "I have such an abhorrence of the war movements in its present aspect, I feel more inclined to denounce it, then to favor the call to arms."²⁶⁸ Because the people of Connecticut placed Seymour on a pedestal, he had been, they held, a good politician; it was shocking that he so openly put down the war effort and the peoples' support of it. The *Courant* even wondered if his denouncement of the war was as bad, or worse, as those in open rebellion.²⁶⁹ Reaction to Seymour's position varied depending on the political party and faction a

266. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 45.

267. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 539.

268. "Is There Anything In It," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 15, 1861.

269. "Is There Anything In It," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 15, 1861.

person was in. The Peace Democrats of course supported their fearless leader, whereas the War Democrats and the Republicans found his actions abominable.

Peace Democrat protest against the war did not stop with just the politicians; it seeped into the lives of citizens and into newspapers as well. Citizens who supported the Peace Democrats raised “secession flags,” also known as “peace flags.” These flags replaced the Stars and Stripes (which were taken down by the protestors) with either white flags or the Confederate Flag.²⁷⁰ Such demonstrations resulted in the reestablishment of the Stars and Stripes, and even legislation to prevent like-minded demonstrations.²⁷¹ Nevertheless, these anti-war acts proved to the Peace Democrat politicians that they had the support of some Connecticut citizens. Likewise, the newspapers with Democratic tendencies lent their support to the Peace Democrat cause. The *Times* often defended ex-Governor Seymour against libelous (at least according to them) articles and defamations made by Republicans and their newspapers, such as the *Courant*.²⁷² A newspaper called the *Bridgeport Farmer* wrote some of the most radical anti-war pieces in Connecticut; in one article it said Lincoln, Seward, and the “fanatical” abolitionists were bloodthirsty men ready to stain the American flag with their brothers’ blood.²⁷³ Moreover, the paper claimed that Lincoln was an emperor leading a “despotic country” by violating the Constitution and his oath as president.²⁷⁴ The *Farmer* pronounced,

Guarantee the South the full enjoyment of their constitutional rights!! The Constitution is the Government—the President is but an agent to execute its provisions and the laws in pursuance thereof; and when he departs from these, he violated his oath, and is himself

270. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 310.

271. “Connecticut Legislature,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 4, 1861.

272. “The ‘Courant’ on Gov. Seymour,” *Hartford Daily Times*, June 11, 1861.

273. “Gems from the *Bridgeport Farmer*,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 18, 1861.

274. “Treason in Connecticut,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 19, 1861.

the greatest of rebels. If he goes further, and uses the power placed in his hands, as agent, to enforce obedience to his violations of the Constitution, he is a usurper.²⁷⁵

The Peace Democrats believed Lincoln subjected the South to coercion and limited their constitutional rights, which made him a tyrant. Peace Democrats supported the right to secession and states' rights, which was the major disagreement between them and the War Democrats. Statements like the *Farmer's* both riled up the Peace Democrats into protesting more and angered all Republican and War Democrats beyond belief; the *Courant* called for the Connecticut defense attorney to bring action upon newspapers like the *Farmer* for their horrific words.²⁷⁶ However, little legal action would be taken against these treasonous newspapers until after Bull Run when their words and began to lead riots and violence. Tension between the two parties and their supporters existed in all sorts of different arenas causing Connecticut to be a hotbed of disagreements, protests, and name-calling from the outset of the war.

Unlike the Peace Democrats, the War Democrats quietly participated in politics at the beginning of the war. They were more likely to support the Republicans than the other Democrat faction because they felt so strongly against secession. As such, the Republicans more often handled the pro-war politics in the papers and Legislature. War Democrats believed, like the Republicans, that the Peace Democrats' spiteful words against the war and Lincoln were treasonous. In a letter to the editors of the *Courant*, a "Madisonian Democrat" wrote,

I have long been a constant reader of the *Times* newspaper, but latterly my faith in the honesty and patriotism of that paper has been severely tested. The political organ that myself and family have long been in the habit of listening to seems to have got bewildered, and is in danger of being lost in a fog. Its political *prejudices* seem to have got the better of its *judgment*, and to be fast rooting out its *patriotism* and *principles*, so that there is danger of wrecking itself and its friends upon the rocks of open rebellion to the Government...Now in 1861, in consequence of the legal election of Abraham Lincoln

275. "Treason in Connecticut," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 19, 1861.

276. "Treason in Connecticut," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 19, 1861.

to the Presidency, we are in the midst of an extensive and violent rebellion against our Government...*Not one word* has ever appeared in the Democratic organ in condemnation of this rebellion! *Not one word* has ever appeared in favor of active measures to sustain and defend the Constitution under which we live!...I should like to ask what sort of a *Democratic Organ* this is? It looks to me very much as if it was in league with the traitors, and was manifesting its hostility to our Republican government by sily favoring and sympathizing with those who are in arms against it.²⁷⁷

Clearly, War Democrats, like the author of this letter, hated the idea of supporting southern secession over the Constitution of the United States. They, like the Republicans, understood secession as unconstitutional.²⁷⁸ Though some disparities likely existed between the Republicans and War Democrats, more differences existed between the two Democratic Party factions. Because of the War Democrats leaning towards the Republican Party, the pro-war supporters held the majority in Connecticut's Legislature.

Peace Democrats often believed that the Republicans, occupying the majority of the Connecticut Legislature, were not heeding their opinions. As a result of this belief, they took it upon themselves to conduct "peace meetings," where the Peace Democrats expressed their love for the Union, their anti-war feelings, and anything else they believed needed to be said. Though common citizens generally conducted and organized these meetings, prominent Peace Democrat politicians made appearances and spoke to their supporters.²⁷⁹ The Peace Democrats would attack government proclamations, expel criticisms of war, and denounce any and all Republican activity.²⁸⁰ In the Republicans' eyes, the purpose of the peace meetings was to expound disloyal sentiments, discourage volunteering, and incite violence and riots.²⁸¹ Though true in some

277. "A Word to Honest Democrats," *Hartford Daily Courant*, June 19, 1861.

278. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 539.

279. Talmadge, "A Peace Movement," 312.

280. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 300.

281. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 184.

instances, the peace meetings also had other purposes, like collectively deciding upon the Peace Democrats' grievances about the state and Federal Governments.²⁸²

For example, although bashing Republicans occupied a great deal of time at the peace meetings, Peace Democrats would also talk up peaceful secession or reasons the South should be allowed to secede and keep their slaves.²⁸³ Often these meetings would result in numerous resolutions just like the ones made in the Legislature, which would state the Peace Democrats' support of the South. The following resolutions from a peace meeting were made in Illinois, but reflected the common feelings of the Connecticut Peace Democrats:

We love our country; that we are in favor of the Union as it once existed; that we are opposed to any part of our Union waging war against the other part, and are in favor of a peaceful compromise of our present difficulties. *Resolved*, That as lovers of our countrymen, we do not feel willing to take up arms and shed paternal blood, unless our country is invaded. *Resolved*, That we will aid and assist the party now in power to bring about a speedy and peaceable settlement of our difficulties.²⁸⁴

The Peace Democrats issuing these resolutions made sure to differentiate between their love for the United States and their dissatisfaction with the continuing war, in other words loyal dissent. Essentially, they implied that while they loved their country, they did not love the direction in which the Republican Government was taking it. Peace Democrats clearly aimed to bring the war to a conclusion by allowing the South whatever concessions it demanded. The use of peace flags often began at these peace meetings as a demonstration and outright declaration of the congregation's beliefs and convictions.

The Republicans and War Democrats had similar gatherings to the peace meetings, called "Union Meetings" or even simply "Town Meetings," where they would discuss how to help the

282. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 104.

283. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 104.

284. "Peace Meetings," *Hartford Daily Times*, June 27, 1861.

troops, entice more recruits, and improve the war effort.²⁸⁵ Papers included articles on both the Union meetings and peace meetings, but the peace meetings generated a much greater reaction because of their anti-American and anti-Federal Government undertones offended the political majority of Connecticut. Governor Buckingham said of these meetings and anti-war acts “The very existence of government, the future prosperity of this entire nation, and the hopes of universal freedom demand that these outrages be suppressed.”²⁸⁶ Because of peace meetings’ purposes, they fostered tension, anger, and mistrust between the pro-war and anti-war Connecticut citizens.

While the peace flags, peace meetings, and Peace Democrat newspapers heightened animosity between them and the Republicans and War Democrats, the greatest betrayal by the Peace Democrats, according to pro-war supporters, was ex-Governor Thomas Seymour’s submittal of Peace Resolutions, on July 3, to the Connecticut Legislature proposing to end the war immediately through compromise.²⁸⁷ Seymour introduced his peace measures with the following impassioned speech,

There seems to be a radical mistake on the part of many people—they seem to think *the South can be conquered*; Sir, this is impossible! It can no more be done than the South can conquer the North! There are brave men *there* as well as *here*...Do you think you can secure their loyalty and affection by *force*?...You have got a kind of foothold, which you call “Peace;” but it is *not* Peace—it is a *smothered War!*²⁸⁸

Ex-Governor Seymour reasoned that even if the Union won the war, they could not coerce the rebelling slave states to automatically change their opinions on slavery, the Union, and the injustices committed against them. So as an alternative, Seymour submitted these resolutions to

285. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 51.

286. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 185.

287. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 300.

288. “Gov. Seymour Peace,” *Hartford Daily Times*, July 6, 1861.

the Connecticut Legislature in the hopes that Connecticut would lead the other states of the Union to accept peace.

These resolutions offered by Seymour reflected the Crittenden Compromise that Congress had mused over earlier that same year.²⁸⁹ The Crittenden Compromise would have made permanent constitutional amendments guaranteeing the continuance of slavery and its extension below the 36° 30' line. Furthermore, it prevented Congress from stopping the interstate slave trade and promised to compensate slaveholders whose fugitive slaves were not returned.²⁹⁰ Seymour's resolutions put forth to either accept the laws in the Crittenden Compromise or modified versions of them in the hopes of obtaining peace and the war's end. His resolutions also aimed to the end the war-funding taxes that would eventually, he predicted, bankrupt the Union's citizens, to agree upon a compromise, and repeal acts like the Personal Liberty Law.²⁹¹ Seymour, though unhappy about the secession of southern states, supported the idea of their state sovereignty.²⁹² Truly, his speech was a call, maybe even a plea, for the war to end as soon as possible through peaceful measures.

Despite his desire for peace, Seymour's resolutions stirred up more turmoil in Connecticut than any other Peace Democrat action had before. The press, especially the *Courant*, had a field day reporting over Seymour's request for the war to end. The two factions of the press, the anti-war and pro-war, fought over each other's representation of Seymour after his bold move. Republican papers called Seymour a "traitor" and "suspicious." The *Courant* wrote scathingly, "Thomas H. Seymour has made himself an object of suspicion and distrust...His

289. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 184.

290. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 253.

291. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 4, 1861.

292. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 329.

legislative career went out in a blaze of infamy. He achieved, in one day, a political damnation from which there can be no resurrection.”²⁹³ By standing in front of the Legislature and declaring his objections to war, the Republican papers deemed him an unpatriotic outcast with no place in the Connecticut Government. Interestingly enough there had been countless politicians across the country that previously had supported the Crittenden Compromise and had not received such harsh criticisms for their opinions. Perhaps it was because of the war’s start or that the Connecticut Republicans were so against compromise that they fought Seymour and his peace resolutions so hard; in any case, Seymour’s resolutions were not welcome among the Connecticut pro-war politicians.

The Peace Democrat papers, on the other hand, defended Seymour from the ruthless criticism. In response to the Republican denouncement of Seymour, the *Times* wrote,

If an effort to save the Union and the Government of the United States, by Constitutional measures, in a peaceful way, is traitorous, then this Resolution is traitorous. But if such and effort is patriotic, then Governor Seymour’s Resolution is patriotic...No man in the community has a more heart-felt desire to preserve the Union, than Governor Seymour. No man entertains more patriotic sentiments than he. But if he believes that a war between the free and slave States of the Union is calculated to break down the Constitution, and sever the Union forever, and so expresses himself, is his love of country and his patriotism to be questioned? Indeed, if he offers a proposition to settle our difficulties, as they have in the earlier days of the Republic been honorably settled, without bloodshed, is he for that act of peace, to preserve the Union, a “Traitor?” Shame upon the men and the presses who make such a charge.²⁹⁴

Peace Democrat papers saw Seymour’s measures as patriotic because they sought to save the Union. Seymour believed that continuing the war would result in countless deaths, unnecessarily, while bankrupting the country and possibly putting the Union in more danger. He reasoned that the better option was to stop war and preserve what the Union had now, before all was lost.

293. “The Seymour Resolutions,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 7, 1861.

294. “The Peace Resolution Offered by Governor Seymour,” *Hartford Daily Times*, July 6, 1861.

Many of Seymour's supporters saw the loyalty and patriotism behind such a rationalization and defended him to those who said otherwise.²⁹⁵ The two parties constantly squabbled over what it meant to be patriotic, treasonous, traitorous, and loyal because each party had different views and values of what constituted the meaning of those words. Their differences and vocalization of them would only be heightened by Bull Run. Seymour's Peace Resolutions and the reactions to them would pull the pro-war and anti-war supporters even further from each other than before. Attacks between the two would become more personal as a result of Bull Run.

Connecticut's political history led to a tumultuous period before, during, and after the Civil War. The warring parties continuously fought over leadership of the state and who was in the right. Though the Republicans held majority in the Legislature (partially thanks to the support of the War Democrats), the Peace Democrats were not far behind and had a significant amount of support throughout the war. The pro-war Republicans and War Democrats made the most of their leadership at the beginning of the war by helping Governor Buckingham lead one of the Union's largest wartime efforts. Meanwhile, the Peace Democrats attempted to achieve peace and restoration of the Union. The Peace Democrats, though a strong party, encountered much difficulty while trying to impress their views upon Connecticut's citizens. In reality, it seems that while Connecticut was a split party state, much of its citizens supported the war efforts and enlisted despite the Peace Democrats. It was only with the loss at Bull Run that the Peace Democrats got their chance to move in on Republican territory.

295. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 4, 1861.

Chapter Four

Connecticut Politics: A Surge of Tension After the Union's Loss at Bull Run

With the news of the Union's loss at Bull Run, the people of Connecticut experienced many different emotions. Stephen Raymond, a Peace Democrat from the town of Darien, a small rural community, celebrated the loss by firing a cannon.²⁹⁶ Angered Republicans quickly responded to this boastful and ostentatious display by seizing his cannon and rolling it into the river.²⁹⁷ Political statements like Raymond's Bull Run commemoration increased Connecticut's political turmoil and revealed a larger split between heated Republicans and War Democrats and inspired the Peace Democrats. Political tension reached an all time high after Bull Run, which resulted in numerous political clashes in Connecticut. While Republicans continued to support Connecticut's war effort, the Peace Democrats looked to capitalize on the demoralized atmosphere and rally anti-war support. Now that the war atmosphere had changed, people believed the war would last much longer, the Peace Democrats and the Republicans had much more at stake as a result of their actions. The public scrutinized each movement of Connecticut's political figures including politicians, newspaper editors, and vocal citizens. Suddenly, after Bull Run, every aspect of the war effort was important. The battle had altered the political and military outlook of the conflict and Connecticut continued to be torn between the two dueling war positions.

Before Bull Run, Union meetings, peace meetings, peace flags, and recruiting were important, but garnered little attention because the war situation was not so bleak. After Bull Run even the smallest peace meeting, recruiting effort or government proclamation seemed to warrant

296. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 104.

297. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 59.

a boisterous response. No longer were actions harmless, people now assumed the worst in others and their actions. While the volunteers of Connecticut continued to enlist with only a slightly lessened enthusiasm after Bull Run, the politicians of Connecticut, Republican and Peace Democrat, had to ensure that their respective parties continued to hold public support despite the implications of Bull Run. Connecticut politicians had to alter their approach to politics because of Bull Run, whereas the soldiers and new volunteers' reasons for enlistment hardly shifted. Bull Run had a much more profound effect on Connecticut's warring political parties because of the unique tension that existed between them.

Initial Political Responses to the Loss at Bull Run

For people who were so sure that the war would be quick, the loss at Bull Run was devastating. How could the Union continue such a fervent war effort, continue to hold the support of its citizens, and win the war? Connecticut party successes now relied on winning or losing military battles. The Republicans battled a fierce Peace Democrat movement that had significant backing in the state; only a year earlier Breckenridge had made a strong showing in the presidential election, larger than anywhere else in New England.²⁹⁸ Unfortunately, for the Republicans of Connecticut, the Union lost at Bull Run, which forced them to alter their approach to the war in all aspects, and most importantly to the Peace Democrats. No longer were they dealing with an outspoken war-dissenting party, but one that had newfound reasons for receiving citizens' support and confidence.

Across the nation, Union citizens began to wonder, because of Bull Run, whether the war could be won and if it was worth continuing; such doubts aided the Peace Democrats and their

298. Talmadge, "A Peace Movement," 308.

war protests. Turmoil and tension within Connecticut brewed between the two parties and their followers; each side realized the significance of Bull Run in regards to political successes. As James McPherson observed, “The paradox of Bull Run: its legacy of confidence both hurt and helped the South; the humiliation and renewed determination both hurt and helped the North.”²⁹⁹ Though McPherson applied this passage broadly to the Civil War, it most definitely applied to Connecticut’s peculiar situation. The loss affected Connecticut Republicans by hurting the peoples’ confidence in them, yet people still enlisted in the army because of their patriotism and belief in the Union. On the other hand, Peace Democrats seized on the Union’s humiliation to support their argument that the war was doomed, unconstitutional and worthless. Though the loss demoralized the Republican Party and stirred the Democratic Party, both reacted in ways that harmed and helped their causes – ultimately keeping the parties on near equal levels in Connecticut’s political sphere. Throughout the rest of 1861 the two parties would battle for the majority of Connecticut’s constituents.

Governor Buckingham had to tackle and fix all of the changes that arose from the Union’s loss with the help of Connecticut’s General Assembly. Connecticut was to organize Twelve Thousand more troops after the battle, which before would have easily been filled and sent to Washington in a few days, but the battle had deterred some from enlisting.³⁰⁰ Republican politicians and newspapers across the state cried for enlistments through moving and motivational words. Just three days after Bull Run the *Hartford Daily Courant* wrote that Bull Run should be used as a lesson that the government could learn from and improve our war policies. After all, Connecticut troops had fought valiantly in Bull Run, however, confidence in

299. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 350.

300. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 178.

Union military leadership had severely depleted.³⁰¹ Speeches made by Republican politicians and articles in Republican newspapers, which highlighted Connecticut's success in the battle, definitely escalated Connecticut men's desire to enlist. Connecticut's newest quota required twelve thousand men who would create four more regiments, the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth for three years.³⁰² Though they were filled quickly by normal standards, in comparison to the first five regiments composed before Bull Run, it took longer to fill new regiments after the battle.³⁰³ "The Ninth Regiment, at New Haven, had been filling slowly. Recruiting for it, though carried on with the same auxiliaries seemed to be less successful than for some other organizations. At no time did it attain the minimum number required."³⁰⁴ As volunteers slowly rolled in, politicians understood that more would have to be done to entice volunteers to enlist at the rate the Federal Government wanted them.

Politicians and their aids took on recruiting roles they previously had not filled and concocted ways to get more enlistments. As a result of Bull Run they had to change their passive tactics and hope that fighting for the cause would be enough for volunteers. Connecticut looked to town leaders to inspire their own to enlist in town companies.³⁰⁵ After the battle, a significant portion of Connecticut companies was made up of friends and relatives from towns because they were "recruited on a community basis."³⁰⁶ Individuals and town war meetings were mostly responsible for the continuing war support after Bull Run – it was a true "rising of the people."³⁰⁷ However, credit could also be given to Bull Run's veterans who returned to Connecticut to aid in

301. "Our Defeat," *Hartford Daily Courant*, July 24, 1861.

302. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 120.

303. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 123.

304. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 140.

305. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 70.

306. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 68.

307. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 70.

recruiting volunteers and to reenlist. The legacy and heroisms reported about the three Connecticut regiments at Bull Run inspired many men to volunteer. They left Connecticut a group of inexperienced boys and came back heroes, and numerous new volunteers desired to hold such reverence.³⁰⁸

As Buckingham suspected, enthusiasm for enlistment had subsided considerably. Casualty figures from Bull Run and enlistment for three years instead of three months had produced a sobering effect...The Governor was faced with a difficult job, but thanks to the three-months regiments, recruiting proved easier than he had anticipated. Even the most bitter Breckenridge Democrats must have been moved by the physical appearance of these regiments when they returned home after the disgrace of Bull Run.³⁰⁹

The civilians inspired by the politicians' war efforts, towns' war efforts, and the three veteran regiments enlisted to join the cause after the loss at Bull Run. They could not stand by any longer and watch this unjust war unfold before them.

Peace and Union Meetings: Resolutions, Responses, and Civil Disorder

While all pro-war political networks strove to enlist volunteers, the citizens not enlisting held meetings to discuss the ramifications of Bull Run, pro-war and anti-war sentiments, and future actions that Connecticut should take. These meetings, both Union and peace, were significantly larger after the loss at Bull Run and demonstrated the extreme interest and involvement of Connecticut's citizens in the war. Perhaps the greatest change about these meetings was the way citizens reacted to them; people used to simply ignore them, but after Bull Run they were met with violence, anger, vocalized protest, and legislation. Anti-war proponents in Connecticut could no longer state their opinions without inciting a riot or retaliatory meeting.

308. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 134.

309. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 63.

No person and no opinion were safe from attack because of the rising tension between the two parties.

In Cornwall Bridge, a town in Litchfield County, residents decided to meet and profess their approval of a peaceful settlement. Convening only twelve days after Bull Run, the loss's effects on the people of Cornwall were still fresh.³¹⁰ Cornwall and the surrounding towns in Litchfield County were comprised mostly of rural land; as such, the population favored the Democratic Party and its desire for peace. The people gathered at a large meeting in which resolutions were made about the war; they deemed the war "unnecessary and fratricidal," and asked for Connecticut's "patriots" to raise their voices for peace and the Union.³¹¹ The speakers appealed to the crowd by linking the North and South through their common ancestry. But the main focus was the unconstitutional nature of the War Democrats and Republicans. The most emotional resolution voted for supported the protests carried out by Peace Democrats.

Resolved. That while we yield to none in love for the Union or in respect to our flag, and in fealty and willing obedience to the Constitution, we nevertheless protest against the war—as we do not believe the people of any State can be cannonaded into a common brotherhood or shelled into a love for the Union. And we furthermore believe, with the late lamented Douglas, that "war is final and eternal disunion;" that a continuance of the present strife must eventually end in a perpetual separation and division of our once happy and glorious nation.³¹²

Though these Peace Democrats claimed they supported and loved the Constitution and the Union they still justified their rights to protest the war being carried out. They suggested that the war was unconstitutional and because of its violations, any hope of reunification between the two sections was impossible. Though Peace Democrats found this reasoning sound, it suggests that they interpreted the Constitution differently from the Republican Party. Republicans, on the other

310. "A Peace Meeting at Cornwall Bridge," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 2, 1861.

311. "A Peace Meeting at Cornwall Bridge," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 2, 1861.

312. "A Peace Meeting at Cornwall Bridge," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 2, 1861.

hand, believed that the Constitution did not allow secession. In supporting disunion, the Peace Democrats, in the eyes of many Republicans, did not revere the Constitution. As such, the Peace Democrats' statements and resolutions appear to be contradictory in numerous ways.

The resolutions of the meeting then turned to Lincoln's actions and berated him for suspending the writ of *Habeas Corpus* and his disregard for other individual rights, which supporters of limited Federal Government intervention also recognized as unconstitutional.³¹³

The final resolution called for

Fellow citizens to meet together without distinction of party, and show to the country their determination to rebuke these acts of violence and aggression which are dividing our Union, subverting our Constitution, usurping the rights of States, destroying the liberties of the people, and tending to anarchy and confusion.³¹⁴

Litchfield's Peace Democrats placed the blame on the unconstitutionality of the Republicans and War Democrats for the South's preemptive secession to Lincoln's inauguration, which shows their sympathetic tendencies to the South. Peace Democrats understood the South's actions as anything but unconstitutional because their political beliefs supported the right to secede.

Interestingly enough, this final resolution called for Connecticut citizens to ignore party divisions to end the war, but when the people of the meeting chose the Connecticut newspapers that would print their resolutions, they only chose Democratic papers.³¹⁵ How they expected to eliminate party lines and unite without informing the pro-war population of Connecticut, we will never know. But this action may hint to their understanding that printing such fervent peace articles in a Republican paper would hurt their party. Furthermore, it was possible that rather than reaching

313. "A Peace Meeting at Cornwall Bridge," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 2, 1861.

314. "A Peace Meeting at Cornwall Bridge," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 2, 1861.

315. "A Peace Meeting at Cornwall Bridge," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 2, 1861.

out to Republicans, the Peace Democrats actually sought to reunite with War Democrats to strengthen their party, which could be supported by the indistinct content of the final resolution.

Momentum from the success of and responses to the Cornwall Bridge meeting continued with the Bloomfield peace meeting of August 5, 1861. Attendance at this meeting reached over seven hundred people, from all around the area including the towns of Bloomfield, Windsor and Granby. The Peace Democrats believed the turnout was so large due to the “deep-seated feeling in the public mind.” However, unlike the Peace Democrats in Cornwall Bridge, this meeting focused most of its time discussing the economic ramifications of the Civil War on Connecticut citizens.³¹⁶ Because of the past few months and the expectation of war to last much longer, the Peace Democrats feared the war would threaten Connecticut’s citizens with enormous taxes, public debt, and the destruction of material interests.³¹⁷

In another direction, the Bloomfield attendees decided to discuss the South’s slave interests, ultimately supporting their rights to their slaves. They resolved, “We solemnly protest against any interference by warlike movements, with the institution of slavery as existing in the Southern States, recognizing as we do the right of those States to determine the social and political condition of the African race.”³¹⁸ This inclusion demonstrates the growing importance of the slave institution to the war cause; the war existed now because of a fight for states’ rights and slavery.³¹⁹ This position provides insight into the Peace Democrats’ feelings about slavery. First, the Peace Democrats realized the possibility of the administration to hurt or destroy the slave institution through war measures. Second, it reflected the Peace Democrats’ beliefs that the

316. “Peace Meeting in Bloomfield,” *Hartford Daily Times*, August 6, 1861.

317. “Peace Meeting in Bloomfield,” *Hartford Daily Times*, August 6, 1861.

318. “Peace Meeting in Bloomfield,” *Hartford Daily Times*, August 6, 1861.

319. “Peace Meeting in Bloomfield,” *Hartford Daily Times*, August 6, 1861.

South had a right to secede because of the threats presented to slavery by the Republican administration, which subsequently meant the endangerment of states' rights. Furthermore, by protesting interfering with slavery through war measures, the Peace Democrats once again showed their allegiances to the South (knowing that abolishing slavery could help the Union win the war) and even that the Peace Democrats possibly still entertained the hopes that the southern states would rejoin the Union, thus upholding their constitutional rights as given to them by the Union. By supporting the protection of slavery the Peace Democrats believed they were protecting the Constitution. The *Times*' report on the meeting said that every person's remarks were patriotic and friendly to the government, despite its actual focus on war dissent. The Peace Democrats, like those of Bloomfield, favored a peaceful settlement for the welfare of the people, New England and the Union and the *Times* believed this meeting proved the public's desire for such peace.³²⁰ Protest against the war suggests that the Peace Democrats supported the South, which caused the political divide between the Union's two political parties to expand.

The following day after the *Times*' report on the Bloomfield peace meeting, the *Courant* responded in outrage against the meeting, its inferences, and the *Times*' coverage. The *Courant* reporter, who titled his piece "Jeff. Davis Secession Meeting in Bloomfield," suggested that the men attending the peace meeting were engaging in mischief by attempting to "distract and divide the loyal sentiments of the people." The meeting attendees, in effect, were guilty of encouraging treason.³²¹ The lawyer and manager of the Democratic Party, William E. Eaton, yelled for "Peace," at the meeting. The reporter recorded,

The great Democratic party, said Eaton, is going to conquer this war, right away. His auditory cheered the declaration just as heartily as if they really believed there was a

320. "Peace Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 6, 1861.

321. "Jeff. Davis Secession Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 7, 1861.

Democratic party to make it good. It is very easy to make peace, said he. All that is necessary is that Lincoln shall ask Mr. Jeff. Davis for a suspension of hostilities for six months!³²²

As in the *Times*' report of the meeting, the *Courant* managed to ridicule the opposing party, while detailing the ideas and plan of the attendees on how the war could be ended and why it should be ended. The *Courant*, like the *Times*, sought to highlight what they believed was patriotic about their position and traitorous about the opposition, and because each position supported such radically different opinions about the war this led to much chaos.³²³

The *Courant*'s response demonstrated the anger and disgust Republicans experienced when learning of peace meetings and their proceedings. Just days after the peace meeting in Bloomfield the Republicans held a Union meeting in the same town, which shows the escalating animosity and frustration between the two parties as a result of Bull Run. The *Courant*'s report on the Union meeting was nothing if not glowing and boastful. The pro-war white men and black men attended an enthusiastic gathering where blacks even served on the council of the meeting. The author noted that this meeting was held in "a room twice as large as the cock-loft of the hotel in which the traitors yelped their treachery a week ago," illustrating the hostility and rivalry between the parties.³²⁴ Furthermore, the previous meeting, he noted, had not reflected the true feelings of the people of Bloomfield and the surrounding towns – the men in attendance at the Union meeting were the real patriots. As in the peace meetings, the Unionists created a series of resolutions. The meeting resolved,

That it is the duty of the government of the United States with all its force, and at all necessary sacrifice of life and treasure, to resist and suppress this rebellion...*Resolved*,

322. "Jeff. Davis Secession Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 7, 1861.

323. "Jeff. Davis Secession Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 7, 1861.

324. "The Union Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 13, 1861.

That we deplore the utter misconception which prevails in most of the slave States of the Union, with regard to the feelings of the people of the free States towards them.³²⁵

Passing the second resolution unanimously suggests the Connecticut Republicans supposed the seceded states left the Union because of the free states' feelings towards them and their institution. They understandably thought this because it seemed to be the only major difference between the two sections. While refuting the "misconception" of the slave states, those at the meeting professed that they never intended to interfere with slavery and that the war for them was about protecting the Union – slavery to them was still a second thought.³²⁶ Aside from the resolutions, the author criticized the Connecticut Peace Democrats and further noted how appalling their actions had been thus far. Moreover, the author made a point to call out Eaton and invalidate his plan to end the war.³²⁷ Such responsive meetings and articles provide significant evidence of ill feelings between the two parties. They were in a serious competition not only for winning the state of Connecticut over, but also to realize their overall war goals. It was only a matter of time until the divide between the two parties would escalate from a battle of words to a battle of fists.

The Cornwall Bridge and Bloomfield peace and union meetings, however, paled in comparison to the fiasco of the Stepney Green *Bridgeport Farmer* disaster on August 24, 1861.³²⁸ Two days before the Stepney Green meeting, Cyrus Northrop noted in a letter to his girlfriend, Libbie, the growing Peace Movement and the tension arising from it; he even specifically mention the *Bridgeport Farmer*. Little did Northrop know the greatest peace

325. "The Union Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 13, 1861.

326. "The Union Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 13, 1861.

327. "The Union Meeting in Bloomfield," *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 13, 1861.

328. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 301.

gathering was about to occur.³²⁹ Three peace meetings happened in Fairfield County on the aforementioned date where peace flags and ideas embittered Unionists and former soldiers passing by. At one meeting a scuffle broke out when Unionists went to tear down the peace flag, injuring five people.³³⁰ Much worse, however, transpired at the Stepney Green peace meeting where not only was it stopped by an angry mob of veteran soldiers and Unionists, but a complete newspaper office was destroyed.³³¹ The *Bridgeport Farmer*, one of the strongest anti-war anti-Republican papers in Connecticut, if not the Union, had for a long time agitated pro-war supporters because of its outspoken resistance to the war, Lincoln and Governor Buckingham. Finally, after the loss at Bull Run, the Unionists could not and would not tolerate cheerful and celebratory reports on the outcome of the battle.

The large peace meeting gathering at Stepney Green had raised a peace flag and congregated under the same principles of the previous peace meetings. In this case, a large number of Unionists and Civil War soldiers, about 5,000 to 8,000 people, became angered enough to suppress the meeting.³³² The Unionists used their large numbers to turn the peace meeting into a patriotic war meeting by overpowering the opposition in a mob-like fashion. After tearing down the peace flag, the Unionist mob left for Bridgeport to destroy the paper that had been demeaning their war efforts. When the group had finished with the *Bridgeport Farmer* office nothing was left but shattered windows and a single press and engine left untouched; the crowd had inflicted several thousand dollars worth of damage.³³³ As violence raged on between the North and South, the *Times* author reasoned that calm discussion comprised the best option

329. Cyrus Northrop to Libbie, 22 August 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

330. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 301.

331. Talmadge, "A Peace Movement," 316.

332. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 108.

333. "Breaking Up of a Peace Meeting in Stepney," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 26, 1861.

for society to rectify the differences between the two parties rather than more violence.³³⁴ Of course, that seemed nearly impossible for two groups that had such different views and had resorted to physical violence because of them. The attack on the *Bridgeport Farmer*, ultimately, changed the state and Federal Governments' preemptive actions toward civil disorder and furthered the contempt between the two parties.³³⁵

Immediately after Bull Run until mid-October, peace and Union meetings happened constantly throughout Connecticut. The parties warred, each trying to outshine their opponent's last meeting; each needed to be grander, larger, more enthusiastic, and receive more press attention. Both parties believed their meetings, and the subsequent resolutions, upheld the Constitution. Of the peace meetings, a *Times* author wrote, they are "springing up from the hearts of the honest farmers of the country towns and looking only to what they sincerely believe to be for the country's good."³³⁶ Though this passage specifically talked about the Peace Democrats, the same could be said for the pro-war supporters in Connecticut; though they might not have all been farmers in country towns, they too believed they were acting on behalf of the Union. Because each party thought their side more righteous, they would not alter their views and could not come to a compromise, which led to the rising civil disorder. Both parties stated that they could not give up on their country yet their disagreements prevented forward-thinking action in the Connecticut General Assembly.³³⁷ Oddly enough, both peace and Union meetings called for the people and "all" parties to support the government, but in no way did these resolutions have the same meaning. At a Union meeting held in Waterbury, a man, Richard D. Hubbard, wrote a letter for the meeting to inspire the crowd. He wrote in opposition of the Peace Democrats,

334. "Breaking Up of a Peace Meeting in Stepney," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 26, 1861.

335. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 302.

336. "Peace Meetings – The Movements of the Hour," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 29, 1861.

337. "Peace Meetings – The Movements of the Hour," *Hartford Daily Times*, August 29, 1861.

Peace on terms consistent with the manhood and honor of the nation is an impossibility. Peace now means national dismemberment, and not that alone, but humiliation and disgrace here and hereafter, from generation to generation. The very word ought to be expunged from the vocabulary of politics until Sumter and Bull Run have both been avenged, and ever stolen fort and citadel have been plucked from the possession of the rebels.³³⁸

Strong words, like these, against peace implied that unless the Peace Democrats change, there was no hope of civility between the two positions; Hubbard after all denounced the Peace Democrats very motto and name.³³⁹ After dismissing the possibility of peace, how could unification between the Peace Democrats and the pro-war supporters be even possible? People had been attending these meetings because of the severe difference in the parties and the desire to lessen the other party's followers. People in the two different war positions had even come to blows because of their opposing views. It seems ignorant to hope for some sort of compromise between the two. And while some hoped for compromise, the major politicians, both Democrat and Republican, knew that no such solution was possible. So the majority, the Republican Party, took control through legislation to suppress the vindictive brawls.

Republican action came swiftly after the debacle of the Stepney Green meeting and destruction of the *Bridgeport Farmer* office as a result of the constant civil disorder with the hope of returning control to the government. The Republicans first moved to censure the Peace Democrat papers, in order to prevent further qualms, protests, and violence. Of course, with the right to free speech and press guaranteed by the First Amendment, the Republicans had to ensure they did not enter into unconstitutional territory. In a proclamation on September 1, 1861, Governor Buckingham spoke of the difference between liberty and license. He said,

338. "At Waterbury on," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 5, 1861.

339. "At Waterbury on," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 5, 1861.

The Constitution...guarantees liberty of speech and of the press, but holds the person and the press responsible for the evils which result from this liberty; it guarantees the person from unreasonable seizure, but it protects no individual from arrest and punishment who gives aid and comfort to the enemies of our country.³⁴⁰

Buckingham believed the peace meetings led to civilian conspiracy against the government through the press' aid; therefore, those who participated, aided, or advertised the meetings were in effect now treasonous conspirators. Buckingham equated any sort of disagreement with the Republican government including, but not limited to, peace meetings, peace flags, and seditious newspapers as conspiracy.³⁴¹ They were outrages that needed to be suppressed and the governor was more than willing to arrest those who spoke ill of the Union. He would no longer tolerate the civil disorder that had arisen as a result of Bull Run.

The *Courant* praised the Governor for his actions, while lamenting the fact that such a proclamation was necessary for Connecticut. The *Courant* cried,

We are sorry that Connecticut, with a history that teams with the deeds of noble men who have sacrificed so much for our country and its blessings, should be the only loyal state where such a proclamation is necessary.³⁴²

This author once again used the spirit of Connecticut's involvement in the American Revolution to demonstrate the true dedication of the state to the Civil War cause. But the sentiment that Governor Buckingham was the only governor of New England, or even the North, to have to issue a proclamation suggests the enormity of the Peace Movement and its effects upon the state. This warning of arrest and punishment, however, was enough to prevent peace meetings from occurring again for a long while;³⁴³ Union meetings, on the other hand, continued to happen because they were not considered seditious, treasonous or as disturbances of the peace. The

340. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 303.

341. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 185.

342. "Gov. Buckingham's Proclamation," *Hartford Daily Courant*, September 2, 1861.

343. Niven, *Connecticut for the Union*, 303.

peace meeting movement was a boisterous yet short movement that reached across the state of Connecticut and scared the Republicans. Members of the Peace Movement had the ability to declare their opposition and treasonous statements so openly, proving the existence of their strong following in Connecticut.³⁴⁴ Since Bull Run, peace meetings had increased in number, size, and effect. “The stampede at Bull Run made the peace-party bolder and more demonstrative.”³⁴⁵ In response, the Republicans had to inflict stricter punishment on their opposition in order to continue with their war efforts, and fortunately for them Governor Buckingham’s proclamation was successful. Bull Run, however, for a fleeting moment had emboldened the Peace Democrats and heightened the divisions between the civilian party members.

Connecticut Political Disorder: Legislation, Elections, and Personal Attacks

As the peace meetings subsided, a special October session of Connecticut’s General Assembly was called to order.³⁴⁶ The session, of course, focused on Connecticut’s war effort, its contributions, and the differences and tension between the pro-war and anti-war legislators. The pro-war legislators attempted to increase volunteers, purchase more war materials, and raise more money for various war aspects like bounties and arms. However, despite the decrease in peace meetings and confrontations, the politicians still warred against each other in the Legislature on a political, and even sometimes a personal, level.³⁴⁷ Since the session was “special,” legislators hoped it would be brief.³⁴⁸ Debates, patriotic speeches, resolutions, and bills comprised its focus. The sole purpose of the Legislature’s extra meeting, according to

344. “Shall the Government be Sustained,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, August 15, 1861.

345. Croffut and Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut*, 104.

346. Warshauer, *Connecticut in the American Civil War*, 63.

347. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 187.

348. “Connecticut Legislature,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 10, 1861.

Governor Buckingham, was to improve Connecticut's war efforts and suppress the Peace Movement³⁴⁹ and to deal with the rebellion.³⁵⁰ For its duration, numerous members of the Connecticut government made speeches regarding the war effort with both parties participating. Most of the session's time passed with squabbles between parties, however sometimes the parties experienced moments of unification and agreement.

Figuring out new ways to recruit volunteers comprised a large portion of the General Assembly's special session. On October 10, 1861, Governor Buckingham made an announcement to a joint convention where he informed the legislators that although recruiting and arming the troops went well, the cost of arming and paying them meant that Connecticut now could only afford to send 10,000 troops out of the 12,000 quota asked for by the Federal Government. Governor Buckingham then asked the General Assembly for more money, so Connecticut could fulfill its duty to the Union.³⁵¹ In response to Buckingham's plea for more money, Mr. Platt (a Republican legislator in the state Senate) introduced a bill to amend the military law that suggested a commutation tax duty. Mr. Platt's bill passed, along with an act repealing the limited enlistment number.³⁵² That same day, October 14, 1861, the Legislature passed a bill that put forth two million more dollars towards Connecticut's war efforts.³⁵³

Days after Connecticut's Legislature voted for more Connecticut troops to be formed, Hartford Mayor Henry Champion Deming announced his appointment as colonel to the 12th Connecticut Volunteer Regiment. Deming accepted his appointment to increase the number of

349. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 14, 1861.

350. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 10, 1861.

351. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 10, 1861.

352. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 10, 1861.

353. Governor Buckingham to Simon C., 17 October 1861, Northrop Family papers, collection 758-759, box 1, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis.

enlistments and inspire other members of the General Assembly to participate more greatly in the war. He wanted them to do more than just pass war bills.³⁵⁴ Deming certainly motivated the Legislature as they decided to create a committee in which a representative of each county would send circulars in their counties calling upon citizens to enlist.³⁵⁵

Deming not only inspired his colleagues, but also influenced the citizens of Connecticut. He overlooked party lines and enlisted despite being a Peace Democrat. He moved many of his followers to enlist in the 12th Connecticut Regiment, which ultimately became known as a Democrat regiment.³⁵⁶ Because the regiment was so heavily populated with Democratic Party members, some Republicans were skeptical of their allegiance and motives behind enlisting. The *Courant* received an angry letter about Deming's nomination that said the community was not happy with his placement. The author implied that the government was forcing the people to like him despite his political party and found this to be repugnant. The *Courant* interestingly enough supported Deming's nomination and refuted much of what the letter said. They replied in the paper, "It is pitiful to see, that in time of war, when our country needs every available resource, there are souls so small that they are chagrined to see a man they have once opposed on political questions put at the head of a regiment."³⁵⁷ Though relatively minor, this sentiment demonstrates some unification between the parties, or at least appeasement. Deming, who was once vehemently against the war, became one of Connecticut's foremost war leaders and symbol of compromise. The peace between Democrats and Republicans, however, did not last longer much longer than the *Courant*'s critique of the angry letter.

354. "The Charter Oak," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 18, 1861.

355. Buckingham, *The Life of William A. Buckingham*, 181.

356. "The Charter Oak," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 18, 1861.

357. "Petty Spite," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 29, 1861.

Just like Mayor Deming, other Peace Democrats received personal petty attacks for their political views. These attacks not only came from the citizens, but also other politicians. Due to outspoken views against the war, ex-Governors Seymour and Isaac Toucey (President Buchanan's Secretary of Navy)³⁵⁸ experienced numerous personal attacks, and one of great significance in the special session of the Legislature. Mr. Platt introduced a bill to the state Senate in mid-October to remove the portraits of governors Toucey and Seymour from the Senate chamber. Platt explained that they were not true and loyal representatives of Connecticut; and with a Republican majority, the bill passed.³⁵⁹ The *Times* immediately made their unhappiness with this bill known. They blamed the abolitionists in the Connecticut Senate for passing such a shameful act and claimed that the Senate had no right to even pass it.³⁶⁰ "The abolition *malevolence* stands at nothing [italics my own]" stated the *Times*. The Peace Democrats accused the Republicans of acting on pure party hatred and disgracing Toucey and Seymour's names with the "stigma of treason and disloyalty." The author believed the citizens would not accept the Republican's actions because of its poor taste and singling out two of Connecticut's political heroes.³⁶¹

The *Courant* argued against the *Times*' attempt to "rally sympathy" for the portrait removal. They stood behind Platt's motives for the bill and professed the patriotism behind his actions. According to the author, the portrait removal was a "lighter punishment" than they deserved.³⁶² The two papers had found a new subject to fight over. The *Courant* then listed every indiscretion made by Toucey and Seymour: Toucey sided with the enemy instead of giving

358. Cowden, "The Politics of Dissent," 542.

359. "Connecticut Legislature," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 16, 1861.

360. "Connecticut Disgraced," *Hartford Daily Times*, October 16, 1861.

361. "Connecticut Disgraced," *Hartford Daily Times*, October 16, 1861.

362. "Toucey and Seymour," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 29, 1861.

support to his country who needed it, meaning he criminally neglected his duty. The dueling papers and parties truly enjoyed embellishing the opposition's actions.³⁶³ Seymour's fault in all of this was not volunteering for the army as a skilled veteran officer in the Mexican War. If unskilled civilians would offer their services, why would not he? And in true dramatic form the article ended discussing Seymour, "Is he a coward? No. Is he incapacitated by ill-health? No. Is he in sympathy with treason and rebellion? Let his own conduct answer."³⁶⁴ While the author completely disregards Seymour's aversion to the war and his reasons for it, this final passage was written in a compelling manner. It might have even moved Peace Democrats when they read it because it appealed to all those who knew soldiers in the army that were being trained and led around by inexperienced officers. Clearly, the *Courant* and the *Times* searched for political actions to fight over and incur drama. Bull Run upped the ante for the newspapers to write more persuasive, outlandish, and opinionated articles. But, more importantly, the portrait fiasco, amongst others, showed the malicious nature arising between the two war positions in the Connecticut Government. The Republicans, the Peace Democrats felt, removed the two portraits out of desire to hurt the two politicians and Democratic Party rather than to help Connecticut and its war efforts. Petty and trivial actions, like the portrait removal, greatly increased after the loss at Bull Run, proving its influence over the political sphere and amplification of political disorder.

As the session of the Connecticut General Assembly came to a close, the political and media attention turned to the town elections occurring in late November. Both parties realized the stakes of these elections. The Democrats took advantage of the Union's loss and worked hard to capitalize off of it. The Republicans, on the other hand, used all possible tactics to gain more

363. "Toucey and Seymour," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 29, 1861.

364. "Toucey and Seymour," *Hartford Daily Courant*, October 29, 1861.

support knowing they had lost some after Bull Run. The parties looked to canvassing throughout Hartford in order to increase their following. The Republicans, who had begun canvassing in early November, accused the Democrats of canvassing to take control of their town and affairs. The *Courant* asked, “Should the town of Hartford be given to the hands of the ‘peace man’?” If it was, the *Courant* theorized that the South would see that,

The North is getting sick of its job; the reaction has set in; light is breaking through the thick curtain of clouds; and soon the South will carry its point; the North will acquiesce in the separation, and make a treaty of peace and commerce, with the Confederate states.³⁶⁵

From this statement, the town election of Hartford clearly meant a great deal to the Republicans and the war effort.

The *Times* responded on behalf of the Democratic Party once again professing the inaccuracies of the *Courant’s* article. First, Democrats had not canvassed, but if they had it would have been legal and within their right. Second, the worry the *Courant* expressed in their article demonstrated that the Republicans knew their party was in trouble this election. Finally, the *Times* declared that if the Democrats were to win the election, they would only act in the interest of the people and the Union.³⁶⁶ The *Times* astutely argued that the Republicans protested the Democratic Party’s canvassing because they posed a true threat to Republican politics. By implying that canvassing was illegal for the Democrats, the Republicans suggested they should have special campaign rights, which actually would have been undemocratic. The Republicans were vying for anyway to put the Peace Democrats down even if it was through false, immoral, or unfair accusations.

365. “Town Meeting at Hand – Warning,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, November 5, 1861.

366. “The Town Election,” *Hartford Daily Times*, November 5, 1861.

The Republicans took the campaign for the election to an even greater height than just canvassing. Republicans called a Union meeting in which they expressed their desires to unify with all who supported the war. A tactic to gain non-Republican votes, specifically War Democrats, the Republicans said their party represented all those who were in favor of the war. They wanted to symbolically eliminate party lines in order to get more votes so that they would win the election.³⁶⁷ The Republican (Union) Party was “in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war, and the preservation of OUR WHOLE Union.”³⁶⁸ This view underscored the main difference between the Republican and Peace Democratic parties; Republicans wanted the North and South unified, whereas the Peace Democrats were willing to let the South separate. The *Courant* made sure that difference became clear in this article; and such implications made clear the treasonous feelings of the Peace Democrats because of their allegiance to the South. Who could oppose the preservation of the whole Union? Such powerful and moving words sought to inspire non-Republicans to join their patriotic party and demean the Peace Democrats at once.

Only the election results of Hartford could show which party had dominated the campaign trail and won the hearts of Connecticut’s citizens – well at least Hartford’s citizens. The citizens of Hartford spoke and elected Republicans for both the first and second town selectman positions. In Hartford the selectmen had been Republican for the last four years. What was significant about this particular election was that the Republicans received fifty-two less votes, while the Democrat candidates won sixty more votes than in the 1860 election.³⁶⁹ Though the Republicans won, the increase in Democrat votes and the decrease in Republican votes (from previous years) demonstrated that Bull Run or the war in general greatly affected peoples’

367. “The ‘Union’ Meeting,” *Hartford Daily Times*, November 11, 1861.

368. “Call for Union Meeting,” *Hartford Daily Courant*, November 8, 1861.

369. “The Town Election,” *Hartford Daily Times*, November 26, 1861.

political positions and allegiances. Furthermore, as the *Times* shrewdly pointed out, the Republicans had to resort to unusual and extreme campaign methods in order to win this election, which further illustrated the lack of confidence in the Republicans.³⁷⁰

Four days after the Republican's win in Hartford, it was the Democrats who won the New Haven town election.³⁷¹ Like the Republicans in Hartford, the Democrats in New Haven "carried the town by handsome majorities."³⁷² New Haven, however, was a notoriously Democratic town, so this outcome was not very jarring. The article in the *Times* celebrating the Democrat success once again declared that the Democratic Party's election did not mean destruction to the Union, but rather on upholding of the Constitution and Union.³⁷³ The split between these two major cities, in a sense, represented the divide between the two parties in Connecticut. Both parties came out with a significant majority in each election, but when looking at the two elections and cities side by side, it appears that either party could have won. Yet, on the other hand, the dwindling number of Republican votes in Hartford further proves the effects of Bull Run on the party and the loss of confidence in the administration.

The Connecticut political sphere was certainly shaken up by the loss at Bull Run. The Union's failure allowed for Democrats to increase their status in Connecticut society, whereas the Republicans needed to reinforce their position after the loss. For the most part, however, the peace agitations were quelled and the Republicans continued to hold a majority of the state. But, for those brief few months after Bull Run when the Peace Movement was at its strongest the Republicans felt quite a bit of pressure. Historian John E. Talmadge wrote,

370. "The Town Election," *Hartford Daily Times*, November 26, 1861.

371. "New Haven Democratic," *Hartford Daily Times*, November 30, 1861.

372. "New Haven Democratic," *Hartford Daily Times*, November 30, 1861.

373. "New Haven Democratic," *Hartford Daily Times*, November 30, 1861.

The Connecticut Peace Movement was no indication that in 1861 the state held lukewarm feelings about the Southern rebellion. The Connecticut militia fought staunchly at Bull Run, and while peace meetings were spreading across the rural areas, thousands were coming forward to fill other state regiments. By the end of the year the Twelfth was shouldering arms. In the two sessions of legislature, the large appropriations asked by Buckingham were readily granted. As a whole the state stood for war. Its peace agitations were the expression of a resolute minority which grew bold in the brief defeatist atmosphere following the first defeat.³⁷⁴

Though Talmadge correctly stated that the troops kept coming after Bull Run, it is important to note that their enlistment slowed. Furthermore, the Peace Democrats were not a “resolute minority,” but a large numbered group that was represented by numerous famous Connecticut politicians, war leaders, and newspaper owners. The Peace Movement was short, yes, but at its peak – right after Bull Run – it was strong enough to worry Republicans. Because the Peace Movement posed such a threat to the Republicans, the two parties often fought in newspapers, the Legislature, and other political venues. Sometimes, like in the case of the *Bridgeport Farmer* sacking, the fighting and tension between the two parties resorted to physical attacks. Bull Run brought about a whole new level of tension; the loss of the battle helped the Democrats and hurt the Republicans at the same time, causing each party to find new motives and create new goals after the battle. Both parties were hungry for control and when one saw hope and the other saw despair, desperation took hold. Before Bull Run such desperation would likely not have led to such physical and scathing personal attacks that occurred after the battle. Bull Run, in effect, heightened the existent political divisions and animosity between the two war positions in Connecticut propelling the parties into further civil and political disorder.

374. Talmadge, “A Peace Movement,” 320.

Epilogue

The Changes Inflicted By Bull Run on Connecticut Politicians and Soldiers

Bull Run changed the Union's outlook on the Civil War. The hopes of a short and easy war were thrown out the window with the loss at Bull Run and replaced with fears of a long, hard, and expensive war. Connecticut veterans and soldiers who enlisted after Bull Run understood that the war between the North and South was now more dangerous, but they volunteered their services to the army nonetheless. Those who joined the Connecticut troops before the Battle of Bull Run, cited fame, boredom, slavery, and the Union as their motives for enlistment. Despite the battle and longer enlistment services, new soldiers still believed those reasons were enough to fight in the war. Connecticut soldiers' lives actually changed very little as a result of Bull Run; of course, enlistment was now for three years, but besides that their lives at camp were essentially what they had been before. Because Bull Run affected few aspects of Connecticut soldiers' lives, yet historians have deemed the battle as one of the most significant in the Civil War, Connecticut must have been influenced by it in some other manner.

After examining Connecticut's politics, before and after Bull Run, it became apparent how affected the political sphere was by the loss there. Connecticut, a state almost equally split between pro-war and anti-war positions, underwent a significant political uprising following the battle. The anti-war position, led by the Peace Democrats, began to vocalize their dissent against the war as a result of the loss. The Union's loss provided them with ammunition to berate the pro-war politicians, made up of War Democrats and Republicans. Because the Union loss was unexpected, citizens began to reevaluate their support of the war, allowing those anti-war politicians to exploit the Union's failure by rallying a greater following. Before Bull Run, the Peace Democrats had aired their grievances through peace meetings and flags, but never on a

large scale. The loss at Bull Run furnished them with reasons and the ability to outspokenly profess throughout Connecticut the major pitfalls of the Civil War. Their acts of dissent became grander, louder, and more greatly supported by Connecticut citizens after the battle. Horrified, the pro-war politicians sought to silence their opposition through political and violent acts. The Union's loss at Bull Run, in effect, started Connecticut's own war including civilians, politicians, and the law. While the soldiers' lives remained largely unchanged by Bull Run, the battle caused much commotion in the lives of Connecticut politicians.

The political uprising that occurred as a result of Bull Run continued on throughout the war. The pro-war and anti-war politicians of Connecticut used each battle's win or failure in order to bolster support for their side. Though the Peace Democrats were not far behind, the Republicans generally remained the more favored group in Connecticut for the war's duration. Buckingham was governor until the war's end and by choice left the position to follow entrepreneurial pursuits and other political positions years later. Buckingham's, and his supporters', fight against the Peace Democrats endured throughout the war; nevertheless, he continued to fulfill his goals as a war supporter and Lincoln.

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